

Sum des lbrs
Egidii & Broga

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LONDON
Printed by W. Miller



2. Sam: 11: 2

2. Sam: 11: 2



1. Sam: 17: 15

DAVIDS

Repentance;
OR
A Plaine and
Familiar Expo-
sition upon the
Lj. Psalm:
First Preached &
now Published for the
benefit of Gods
CHVRCH
Most needfull for the
times, by Samuel
Smith, late Preacher
of the word of God at
Pittlowall in Essex.



2. Sam: 2: 4

LONDON
Printed by W. Wilson.



2. Sam: 12: 7

DAVIDS

REPENTANCE :

O R

A plain and familiar Exposition of the 51 Psalm; first preached, and now published for the benefit of Gods Church.

Wherein every Christian may see before his eyes the pattern of unfeigned *Repentance* : Likewise exhorting every man to labour for repentance, before sickness and death seize upon them : for after *Death there is no Repentance to be had or expected.*

The eighteenth Edition.

Newly revised and profitably amplified by the Author *Samuel Smith*, late Preacher of the Word at *Prittlewell in Essex.*

Luke 13. 5.

Except ye Repent, yee shall all perish.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *W. Wilson*, dwelling in little *St. Bartholomews near Smithfield*, 1660.



To the Christian Reader.



Christian Reader, seeing the burthen of the Ministry is this, to pluck men out of the Kingdom of Satan, & to bring them to the living God ; surely then it is the duty of all those that have taken upon them this boiy Calling, to help forward this worthy work. And to this end I entertained my spare hours in the time of my long sicknesse, (when I was not able to perform my duty in the Congregation of my charge) in publishing this short exposition of the 51. Psalm to the view of the world, not for vain glory, or for any good conceit or opinion that I have of the same, or of my selfe, as he knoweth that knoweth all things, but chiefly for the honour of God, that if it please the Lord to give a blessing to it ; sinners, even such as sit in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, might be moved to Repentance. It is an opinion of carnall men who remain under Satan, and his dominion, (as all men do by nature) that when sinne is committed, done, and past, they shall never be called to account for the same. But (alas) no length of time can wear sinne away, if it be not taken away by true and unfeigned repentance : yea, the sinnes of our youth ;

To the Christian Reader.

which many years ago we have committed, (if now in time we do not repent, and stop the mouth of the same) shall stand up as new and fresh against us, as the first hour we committed them. O that we could be wise to think on these things! Our selves wax old, our bodies declining to the grave; and will we take no pains to wash away our sins, but let them stand in their strength against us? This is a great folly: Let men therefore think of this betimes; there is no going to heaven with dry eies, or on beds of Down. Now if this poor work of mine may find entertainment with thee, I shall so much the more be encouraged to take pains in this kind on other places of Scripture, as upon the first Psalm, which I have now published, with many other. And wishall, may help thee forward to this necessary duty of Repentance; I have then my desire; give the praise to him from whom all good cometh, who worketh in us the will & the deed; to whom be praise and honour for ever and ever. Amen.

Thine in the Lord,

SAMUEL SMITH.

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Psalm 51.

To him that excelleth, *A Psalm of David*, when the Prophet *Nathan* came unto him, after he had gone in unto *Bathsheba*.

HAve mercy on me, O God, according to thy loving kindnesse, according to the multitude of thy compassions, put away mine iniquities.

2. Wash me thoroughly from my wickednesse, and cleanse me from my sins.

3. For I know mine iniquities, and my sin is ever before me.

4. Against thee, against thee only have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight : That thou maist be just when thou speakest, and pure when thou judgest.

5. Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

6. Behold thou lovest truth in the inward affections : therefore hast thou taught me wisdom secretly.

7. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8. Make

8 Make me to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore me to the joy of thy salvation, and establish me with thy free Spirit.

13 Then shall I teach thy waies unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from blood, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing joyfully of thy righteousness.

15 Open thou my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest no sacrifice, though I wouldst give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

17 The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit: a contrite and broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Be favourable unto Sion, for thy good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou accept the sacrifice of righteousness, even the burnt offering and oblation. Then shall they offer Calves upon thine Altar.

A



A plain and Familiar Exposition upon the
Fifty one Psalm.

First Preached, and now
Published, for the benefit of
Gods Church: Exhorting every man
to labour for Repentance, before death
seize upon him; for, after death there
is no repentance to be thought of,
or expected.

PSALM L.

The Text.

*To him that excelleth. A Psalm of
David, when the Prophet Nathan
came unto him, after he had gone
in unto Bathsheba.*

Concerning the Booke of
the Psalmes, it is an Epi-
tome of the whole Scrip-
ture, teaching us what wee are to
believe

believe and do, both to God and man: In which, as in a Glasse we may clearly behold the Nature of God, his wisdom, goodnesse, and mercy towards his Church and his Children: As also most notable spectacles of his fearfull wrath, and vengeance against the Wicked and ungodly.

If men would pray unto God, and crave for any mercy and blessings at his hands, here be excellent platforms of true, hearty, and most earnest prayers. If men would give thanks for any blessings received, for judgments escaped, or for deliverance from wicked and ungodly men, here be worthy examples and directions, if men would find comfort in temptations, troubles and afflictions, and learn with patience to bear them, there is no part of the Bible more sweet and comfortable. And therefore it should be our delight and study, and we ought to spend the more time in reading, and also in the meditation of so excellent and worthy a Book: according to that of our Saviour, *John.*

5. 29. *Search the Scriptures*: because that will bring a man to true happinesse in the end : Namely, to know God to be his Creator, to know Jesus Christ to be his deliverer, to know himself, and to direct him in that narrow path that shall lead unto life.

I thought good to speak of this Psalm, because it containeth in it a most worthy example of true and unfeigned Repentance, without which there is not, nor can be any pardon of sin : *Except yee repent, yee shall all perish.*

Now it containeth a famous and most worthy example of Repentance, if you either regard the person who was a renowned and eminent King of *Israel*, a Holy Prophet of God, yea, a man after Gods own heart.

Again, in the matter of the Psalm, and of his Repentance, you shall see a Spectacle of two great and grievous sins committed by *David*, wherein we may also see the great frailty, and weaknesse of Gods children by Nature

ture which may teach us to pray unto the Lord for the Spirit of Corroboration : for if *David* fell, who was a holy man ; whither shall we fall who are greater sinners, if God do but a little leave us to our selves ? and howsoever by the speciall mercy of God towards *David* ; this sin of his prevailed not to his eternall condemnation ; yet we see what terroure of conscience, and grief of heart he sustained before he could be assured of his former comfort. And this shall all flesh find, that the pleasures of sin for a season here, will bring with them sorrow in the end ; a thousand tears and sighes for one sinne of pleasure. As for the Repentance of *David*, we shall see it most excellent and admirable : for he doth freely and truly confesse his sins, and is not ashamed to Chronicle them even in the Word of God, for all posterity, to read and peruse. And lastly, we shall see the endless love and mercy of God towards poor and miserable sinners, when they shall truly repent and seek for mercy.

The

Dividing
of the
Psalm.

: The whole Psalm containes two parts: First, the preface of the Psalm, shewing the occasion of it, and by whom it was penned; & secondly, the Psalm it selfe, which containes in it nothing else but a most earnest prayer of *David*, as a poor prisoner arraigned and condemned at the Barre of God. And the petitions of the Psalm are two-fold: First, there be some concerning *David* himself, to the eighteenth verse: And secondly, some concerning the good of the whole Church in generall: Because his sin had indangered not onely his own estate, but even the good and flourishing estate of the whole Church of God, and his own Nation.

In the Preface or Title of this Psalm.

First, mark to whom this excellent Psalm was committed: *To him that excelleth: or to the excellent Musitiā.*

Secondly, by whom it was penned, *A Psalm of David.*

Thirdly, the circumstance of time, when it was penned: *When Nathan the Prophet came unto him.*

Then

Then fourthly, the occasion of it :
Namely, *Nathans* message from the
Lord, sharply reprovng *David's* sins,
namely, Adultery and Murther.

*To him that excelleth, or to the ex-
cellent Musitian.*

First to
whom
this
Psalm
was
commit-
ted.

1 Chr. 15

1 Chr. 9. 1

The Prophet *David*, when he had
written any Psalme for the comfort
& benefit of the Church of God, was
wont, as it seemeth, to commit them
unto those men who were appoi-
nted Masters of the Musick, wherein
they did sing in the Temple to Gods
glory, as *Heman, Asaph, Corah, Jedu-
thun, &c.* And therefore *David* & *Sc-
lomon* were commanded of God to
appoint some Companies of Musi-
cians to sing unto God, these were
the Masters of the Musick to set the
Tunes, and dispose them. You must
understand now *David* was not the
Author of all these Psalmes, though
they be called *Dauids* Psalmes ; but
some other Saints and Holy men did
pen some of them, as well as he ; but
David, being a man after Gods own
heart, did cause them to be gathered &
collected, and called them his Psalmes.

From

From hence, that *David* did commit this Psalm and the rest, to the Masters of Musicke to be sung in the Churches of God to his glory; and especially this 51. Psalm, being one of the 7. penitentiall Psalmes, or rather a Psalm of Psalmes, for comfort to an afflicted mind ; therefore was this Psalm placed by the wisest in the midst of the other penitentiall Psalmes, even as the Sun is placed in the midst of the Firmament : Likewise we learn that the singing of Psalmes in the Assemblies, and Congregation of Gods people, is not onely an ancient custome of the Church of God, but very lawfull and commendable : used as we see here in the dayes of *David* and *Solomon*, & commended them to God. Now the Birds, which are but poor creatures in respect of man, should stir us up to sing Psalmes : as St. *Ambrose* reports it would make a man to blush when he considers how the Nightingale and Lark every morning and evening sing out their Notes to the glory of their maker, and man so much to neglect

Doct. 2.
Singing
Psalmes
in ancient
practice.
The seven
Peniten-
tial
Psalmes.
Psalm. 6.
Psalm. 32.
Psalm. 38.
Psalm. 51.
Psalm. 10.
Psalm. 130.
Psalm. 143.

Acts. 16.
15.

lest his Maker, as not morning and evening to sing praises unto his Holy Name. It is Gods own command that we should sing, and therefore it is good : The Book of Psalmes is called the Song of Heaven, and the Key to Paradise : and when we sing these Psalms, we must do it with the duty of holinesse and obedience. *David* he was styled the sweet singer of *Israel* ; O, saith he, *sing praises, sing praises to our God upon a ten stringed instrument* : In the Church Triumphant, there they sing *Hallelujah* to the Almighty : and in the Church Militant we sing *holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts*. So it was the usual practise of Christ and his Apostles to sing Psalmes, or Hymns after they had eaten: and it is said of *Paul & Syllas*, that being in Prison, they sung Psalmes at midnight in the stocks, even there they sung Psalmes to God: the Virgin *Mary* she sung, *my soul doth magnifie the Lord* ; and so likewise of old *Simson* ; *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: so in David, I will sing a new song unto the Lord* ; & in the daies of the

the Apostles it was used as *Paul* shews commanding the *Colossians*, and all Christians to use this Holy exercise : *Admonish your selves in Psalmes, Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing with a Grace to the Lord in your hearts.* Col.3.16
1 Cor.14

This then should stir us up to the more carefull practice of this carefull duty : and it condemns the prophane-ness of those scoffing wretches, who mock, as at all other duties of Gods people, their Prayer, Hearing, Reading, Exhorting, &c. so that their singing of Psalmes. Alas, these prophane men, and gracelesse Wretches having no grace in their hearts, they see not nor perceive not the inward comfort which Gods Children find in singing of Psalmes unto their God.

But some may say, I could never receive any such spirituall joy in singing of Psalmes. It may be so, & thine estate is so much the more to be feared. As the prodigal Son in the 15 of St. *Luke*, did know it and enjoy it; so the Eldest Son asked what manner of joy it is? And so many worldlings aske, *quale gaudium*? Wee answer,

sweet, that which is known by taste, cannot by speech : So taste what joy it is, and then as Christ said, *I have bread to eat, and ye know not of it* : So may the Christians say, I have joy, and ye know not of it.

But because most men and women hink it an excellent and comfortable practice, I will shew you how wee ought to be qualified, lest if we take more delight in the sweetnesse of the Musick, than in the comfort of the Psalm, we do but make a noise, and are like sounding Brasses, losing the benefit of singing, yea, take the holy name of God in vain.

First then, that we may sing to Gods glory, and to our comfort, we must sing with the heart, and with the understanding : So Saint Paul, Col. 3. 16. saith, *I will pray and sing with the spirit and understanding*, that is, with Knowledge and understanding of that I sing; and not as the Papists use to roare in their Masses in Latin, so as none that hear them understand what is said or what is done, nay, scarce themselves.

Secondly,

How to
sing a-
right.

Secondly, for the matter of our singing, it must be Psalms or Hymnes, and spirituall Songs, not vile and filthy Songs, which are the Devills Musick in the mouths of prophane persons : wherefore let us put away all vile and filthy songs, and let us cheer up our spirits, & make our selves merry with *David's* Musick. As the Spirit of God hath given him the name of the sweet Singer : So let his Musick be sweet in our eares, let us often sing this Psalm, and other his mournfull songs, that we may be filled with the joy of the Spirit, as he was, and passe from hence into those eternall joyes whither he is entred, that so joyntly we may sing *Hallelujah* together.

Thirdly, we must not sing to spend the time, or to satisfie our eares with the noyse or tune ; but singing wee must seek to expresse our thankfulness to God, to redeem the time, as *St. Austin* did, be not like the tinkling Cymballs, nor the Musick of Children, and therefore we must ever labour our selves to be affected
in

in singing with cheerfulness unto God.

Fourthly in singing, seeing it is a part of prayer, we must look to do it with all reverence as unto God himself, and as we would shew all seemly and decent behaviour when we thank our superiours for a good turn, so should we to God, and with more reverence. These things being duely considered; singing, it doth procure dignity & grace to the holy motions, and much availeth to stir up the mind to true affection, and ferventness of prayer; but we must diligently beware that our ears be not more bent to the note, than our minds to the spiritual sence of the words.

By whom
it was
penned.

1 Sam. 9.

14.

2 Sam. 13

The second poynt in the Title of the Psalm, is the Pen-man of this Psalm: howsoever it was indited by the Holy Ghost, who was the Author of it; yet you see it was penned by *David*, a worthy and renowned King of *Israel*, a holy Prophet of God a man after Gods own heart, endued with excellent and singular gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit.

Now

Now from the Pen-man of this excellent Psalm, who was so worthy a King and Prophet, and containing in it such excellent and necessary matter, it ought to move us to the great likeing & regard of this excellent Psalm ; for we will listen to the speeches of learned men : their counsells and their exhortation, being wise, grave, godly, and learned, do most affect us. Lo then, here is a Psalm, penned by a most skilfull Musitian, by a Renowned King, & worthy servant of God : Yea, a man after Gods own heart. Now the person that wrote this Psalm, should move us very often to the liking of the matter contained in this Psalm. *Ahab* said of *Micajah*, he never prophesied good : So *David*, the sweet Singer of *Israel*, alwayes good : *The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever*. He was loved of God, the appoyntment spirituall and temporall doth verifie it : Applauded of all both men and womed. *David hath killed his ten thousands* : A man justified of his enemies, *Thou art more righteous than*

Ps. 119.
100.

Is esteemed of his subjects, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us. A man more learned than his teachers.* He was a compound of vertues, a man after Gods own heart : yet no way desiring the vain applause of men, confesseth here his sin, casteth his Crown at the Lambs feet, with the 24 Elders, contending to give glory to God, that so he might find peace on earth. O what an excellent thing were this, if Kings, Nobles, and great men, would imitate *David* in this, to call themselves to account of their sinfull and youthfull crimes ; and to set down their lives, that so they might have matter to praise God for his blessings, and to acknowledge their sins with *David*. *David* then was the Author & Writer of this Psalm, yet *David* reports the fault in himselfe, as if some stranger had committed it : He forgets as it were his own people, and his Fathers house, setting all affection aside, maketh a plain declaration of his own transgression. *A wise man* (saith *Solomon*) *will accuse himself*, Prov. 18. So doth
David

David, not shrowding his head, nor running into a Bush as *Adam* did, but writing his fault in his brow, and poynting with his finger at the Transgressour under his own name, saith, *A Psalm of David, being reprov'd by Nathan, &c.*

And indeed this doth make greatly for the Authority of the Word of God, in that the writers of it do not stick to set forth their own frailties and imperfections, that God might have the honour, and man bear the deserved blame : contrary unto the manner of the writers of this World, that howsoever against enemies they speak all, and more than all, or extoll their friends to the highest, yet in them we find few examples in laying open the errors of themselves, especially when in any sort it may be concealed.

Writers
of the
Scripture set
forth first
their own
imperfections.

This course wee may behold in the whole Scriptures. *David* he recorded his Adultery and Murther, as here in this Psalm, his repentance of them.

1 Sam. 1.

Jonah his disobedience; *Job* his impatience; the Idolatry of *Solomon*; the

Job 31.
1 Reg 5.

Num. 11.

Note.

The time
when
this
Psalm
was pen-
ned.

discontentednesse of *Moses*; the fretting of *Jeremy*, and the like. Here we may see the wisdom of the word of life, here we may admire their spirits who, to give God the glory, do rejoyce in their infirmities, and proclaim their own follies. And if we would compare these Writers, inspired with the holy Ghost, with the works and writings of other men; we must either shut our eyes, or else acknowledge a great difference.

The third circumstance, is the Time when this excellent Psalm was penned, and that is expressed, *When Nathan the Prophet came unto him*. Concerning the sense of these words, some men differ: Some think that *David* being fallen, lay in his sins a whole yeare, without any touch of conscience, and sound repentance for them. But it is not like, as others think, that so worthy a man as *David* was, after Gods own heart, could lye so long in sinne without any remorse and touch of conscience. For my part, I take it, that though *David* could not be so stony and

and so steely hearted, or benumbed, but must needs have some gripeing and sting of conscience; and no doubt his heart must needs smite him, unlesse he had been more forgetfull then the vilest sinner. So, for all that he was not so humbled for his great and grievous sin as he ought to have been, till such time as *Nathan* the LORDS Prophet came to rouse him, by the Alarm of Gods judgements denounced against him; wherein we may see first, that the child of God may both fall foully, and lye in sin a long time without repentance: And secondly, that the Ministry of *Nathan* is needfull to reclaime us, else we shall not only sin: but lye and wallow in them. And indeed, not so much the falling into sin, as the lying in sin, wounds the conscience, and procures Gods judgments. God did not leave *David* without armour for his wounded conscience, when *Nathan* told him, *Thou art the man*: No, he gave him a heart to repent for his sin; for sin brings first repentance, and then repentance brings forgivenesse. *David*

2 Sam. 12

presently confesserth and saith, O Lo d, I have done these secret sins which none but thy All-seeing eye can discern : *David* thought when he enjoyed the sweet water of content and pleasure, that all was well ; he did not remember that his sweet water must return to the salt Sea again ; for his little pleasure to have a World of sorrow.

Hence wee may gather first of all, for our great comfort, that it is the Lords mercy, somerimes to let a man fall into sin. For as we build a wall the higher, by casting the foundation deeper ; So the Lord by humbling his children, oftentimes raises them up, As in a tempestuous wind, trees shaken by the root, in calme do spread themselves the more : So the child of God having his root shaken, doth more strongly fasten himself in Christ Jesus.

Dost.

The
childe of
God may
fall after
he is cal-
led.

Note in *David*, A man after Gods own heart, that the true child of God, after he is truly and effectually called and sanctified, may very dangerously fall, and sin against God even

as

Gen. 37

Mat. 26.
70.

as *David* himself did : so *Josephs* brethren, how did they conspire against him, to sell him ? yea to kill him ? and lay a long time, yea, almost twenty yeares in that sin before they were truly humbled for it. How foully did *Peter* fall, though he did not lye long in sin ? For the Text saith, *as soon as he heard the cock crow, he remembered the words of his Master, so he went out & wept bitterly* : And as the Judgement-hall was a place of sinning, so it was no place of repenting; but he *went out presently & wept bitterly*. And as *Clement Alexandrinus* doth testifie, he wept so sore that he made dents and furrows in his cheekes, with the teares that did fall from his eyes yea his repentance was so great, that he leapt into a Sea of teares, when he denyed Christ. *St. Peter* he wept for his sin bitterly; he wept, and mingled with his tears, the gall of an holy and spiritual revenge and anger, for the sin he committed, and the good he had omitted. So likewise *St. Paul*, when he saw his sin of cruelty, blasphemy, & persecution of the Church of God, what a

revenge did he take upon himselfe in Watching, and Praying, and Fasting and in labouring to build up the Church of God again, which he before had pulled down, even to the hazard of life, both by Sea and Land ; by Theeves and Robbers, and divers other perills. Thus man for a little pelf, runns himselfe into a world of dangers, and for a momentary pleasure, hazards his Soul to eternall perdition, by the uncleannesse of his heart. Yea, as *Job* saith, *Job. 15. What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he should be just : Behold, he found no stedfastness in his Saints, &c.* And *Pro. 20.9. Who can say, I have my heart clean ?* All which testimonies of Scripture serve to confirm the truth of this doctrine, that the best of Gods Saints in this life, are oftentimes overtaken by the policy of Satan, and the frailty of their own flesh, to commit great and grievous sins : Yea, the dearest of Gods Children sometimes are asleep. *Matthew. 25. The wise and foolish Virgins both slept.* But yet here

here is the difference; the wise awakened, arose out of their security ; the foolish prolonged the time. O then, if Christ Jesus have looked upon us, as he did upon *Peter*, let us look upon our selves : if *Nathan* be come, let us sleep no more.

Seeing that GODS Children may thus fall into sin, and lye in sin so long a time ; although no man may hereby be emboldned to sin with *David*, much lesse to lye in sin without repentance ? Yet we find, that such hath been our security, and exceeding carelesnesse, that GOD leaving us in his just judgement, wee have sinned, and lain in sin a long time, a year or two, or ten, yet if we can repent and truly turn to GOD, as *David* did, wee need not doubt but he will shew us mercy, as to *David*.
At what time soever. The Lord limits no time if men doe repent truly : but if men shall deferre their repentance in hope of this, that they may repent hereafter, then let them take heed lest the Lord cast them off ere they be aware, or else leave them to

hardnesse of heart, and impenitency like *Pharoah*, like *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, or like *Herod*, or like *Ananias*, & *Sapphirah*. And there is a great difference between this, when a man hath lain in sin, and the time is past; and when a man commits sin, and defers in hope of time to come.

Here wee may see the difference between this life and the Life to come. Here in this life the remnants of sin, as so many spots and stains in the flesh, remain even in those which are cleansed by the blood of Christ: But when as the Faithfull shall be glorified, they shall then be found unbleameable, without spot or blemish. If we shall now cast our eyes even upon the best of Gods holy servants, as *Noah*, who forgot himselfe, and dranke too much Wine, *so that he was overcome by it*. *Abraham* had his infirmity, giving at first little or no credit to what the Lord had told him; that his Wife *Sarah* should bear a Son. *Lot* had his weaknesse of nature also, in committing incest with his Daughters. *Joseph*

Gen 9.2

Gen. 17.
7.Gen. 19
33.

Joseph had his weaknesse also, for no
 sooner is he become a Courtier, and
 in *Pharaohs's* Court, but presently he
 learns to swear, *by the life of Pharaoh.*
David, who is the occasion and sub-
 ject of our present discourse, had his
 failings, in killing *Uriah* with the
 sword: secondly, in taking *Uriah's*
 Wife to be his. *Peter*, he had his slips
 and infirmities, in denying his Lord
 and Master with oathes and curses,
 so that he must have a silly creature,
 a Cock, to put him in mind of his
 error. *Paul*, he had his naturall pas-
 sion of revenge burning in him, in
 getting Letters to persecute the
 Christians at *Jerusalem*, and he must
 have a voyce from Heaven to convert
 him; but being converted, what a
 stout Souldier was he in fighting the
 Lord's Battle? *St. Thomas*, he had his
 fault of infidelity, though an Apo-
 stle, and would not beleieve till he had
 felt and seen the wounds of his Ma-
 ster Christ Jesus, who confirmed and
 settled his faith, and then he could
 confesse and say, My Lord, and my
 God. Old *Zacharias* the Priest, had
 his

Gen. 42.
15.2 Sam. 12
9.Mat. 26.
27.

Act. 9. 32.

Joh. 20.
27, 28.

Luk. 1. 18.

his infirmities as well as the rest ; for the Angell told him, that his Wife should conceive a Son : which he doubted of, and said, *Whereby shall I know this ?* He must have an Angell to confirm it to him. Thus we may easily see shame in glory, darknesse in light, folly in wisdom, infidelity in faith.

But when Christ shall appear and we likewise participate with him in glory, we shall be made like unto him. Here wee cease not to provoke God by reason of our sins, which continually we do fall into, which should be unto us as bitter as Gall or Wormwood : But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, & death shall be swallowed up into victory, then shall we cease to sin, & be as the blessed Angels in Heaven.

Te 3.
Repentance is
not in
mans
power,

We see that repentance is not in mans power, but it is the speciall gift of God : For if the Lord had not sent *Nathan* to him, to awake his benumbed conscience, Alas, he had run on still in sin, he had lain and rotted.

in his sins : But the Lord sends his servant *Nathan* to admonish him, & to awaken him. And so the people of God acknowledge in many places of the Scripture, *Convert thou us, O Lord, and we shall be converted.* Again, *Instruct them with meekness, proving if God will at any time give them repentance, that they may be saved.* O then, seeing repentance is not in mans power, but it is the special gift of God: neither could *David* turn of himself, though he turned from God of himselfe : What madnesse then is it for man and woman to deferre all till the last gaspe ; saying, if they may have but three houres before death, they care for no more ; as though they had repentance at command. But oh, thou vain man, see *David*, he fell by his own will, but could not rise by his own power : and art thou better than *David* ? No, no ; unlesse the LORD give thee Repentance, thou canst never repent. Oh then seek at Gods hands, & repent while the LORD calls, and offers thee the means. For first our persons must be accen-

Jer. 31.

18.

2 Tim. 2

25.

Man sins by Nature, but cannot rise with our Grace.

accepted, and then our Prayers God will hear, as he did *David*; for *David* said, *I have called upon thee in the time of trouble, & thou didst hear me.*

Seeing that *David* repented not, till he was awakened and roused up by *Nathan* the Lords Prophet and Minister, and thought himself safe, and that he had got Heaven; but he went towards Heaven even as *Pharaoh's* Chariots did after the Children of *Israel*, with heavy wheelles, burthen-some: But when he had notice of his sin, he then went light and joyfully to meet his God, saying, *I have sinned.* Hence I gather, That the word of God preached, is the means both to beget Faith and Repentance, and to increase and revive the same: for how had *David* gone on still in sin, if *Nathan* had not humbled him by the Word of God? It is able to break a stony heart, it is able to wound a heart of steel: for what heart can be more obstinate, rebellious, stubborn, stony, and steelly, then was the heart of the cruell *Jewes*? Yet by *Peter's* Sermon they were pricked, and throughly wounded

Dolt. 3.

The Word preached the means to beget faith and repentance.

Act. 2. 37

wounded and humbled. *Is not the word of Jehovah like unto fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the stone?* It is able to break a stony heart, which is as hard as flint. *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of God, because I know it is the Power of God to Salvation to all them that beleve.* It is compared to a sharp two-edged sword, *It is mighty in operation, and sharper than a two-edged sword:* It is able to give life to those that are dead in trespasses & sins.

So then wee must acknowledge a perpetuall necessity of the Word, to beget us, also to increase in us the graces of Faith and Sanctification, which without the use of the Word preached, are subject, if not to dying, yet to decreasing; if not to perishing, yet to diminishing. And from hence it is, that the Lord saith of his Vineyard, his Church, *Esay. 27. 3. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any assaile it; I will keep it night and day.*

We see by dayly experience, that after our repentance, and the renewing of our minds, we are subject to stumble

Jer. 31.
29.

Ro. 1. 16.

Heb. 4.
12.
Eph. 1. 1,
2.

ble, and to fall into sin, and ready to lye long in it, as men cast into a deep and long sleep, if wee be not awaked with the LORDS Trumpet, as we may see by this present example of *David*, who was by the subtilty of Satan surprized, and drawn to commit two horrible sins, Adultery and Murther, and lay a long space securely in them, untill he was by the Prophet *Nathan* rouzed up and recovered, 2 *Sam.* 12.

Wherefore as there is a continuall use and necessity of repentance, so is there a continual use of the Preaching of the Word, that we should not stand at a stay, but increase more and more, till wee come to the fulnesse of the perfect age of CHRIST JESUS.

See 1.

Gods
Word
only
converts

This serves to commend unto us the power of the word of God, which is both able to kill sinners, and to make them alive again, and puts a manifest difference between the word of man, and the Word of God. All the wisdom, learning eloquence, and wit of man is not able to save a soul, to convert a sinner, onely the word of God
can

can do it, even the plain and simple Preaching of the Gospel can do it : *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.* Though nothing be more contrary to our nature than the Word of God, yet it doth by Gods blessing converts us.

Well then, seeing *Nathan* is the messenger, and the meanes that God uses to reclaim *David*, thus sleeping securely in his sin, whereas the Lord could have converted him without *Nathans* help. We see then, that those men who do despise *Nathan* and the Lords Prophets and Ministers, must needs dye in sin, without any repentance, who cannot endure themselves to be admonished and reprov'd : even as a man having a long festered sore, that is even rotten and putrified, he cannot abide the Chirurgeon should touch it or lance it : Alas, it will be his baine in the end. So, is thy soul sick, full of rottennesse and corruption, and yet thou continuest in sin, and lvest therein, and wilt not suffer the Lords Chirurgions ? thou canst not endure *Nathan* to be so

housie

1 Cor. 1.

15.

Pl. 19. 7.

Rom 2

14.

Use 2.

Despisers

of the

Word

must

needs

perish.

Note.

busie with thy sins, what will follow but utter ruine of thy soule, and the bane of it ? A guilty conscience betrayes it selfe before it be examined, therefore God hath given man a conscience, and placed it within him, as an eternall remembrancer ; which at one time or other breaks out, and cryes guilty when no man accuses him. And therefore let all men be content to have their heart search-ed with the tents of the Law, to be ript up, and lanced till the blood follow, for this is the next way to be cured.

Doct. 4.
A fearful
thing to
live in
sin with-
out re-
pentance

In *David* observe what a fearfull thing it is to lye in sin without repentance : it is that which maketh a grievous wound in the conscience, draweth down many and grievous judgements of God, as in *David*: he felt the smart of his sin a long time ; yea, carried the skars of it to his grave, it was a clog unto him all his life. *Peter* committed a grievous sin in denying his Lord and Master ; yet he lying not in sin, repented presently, went out, and wept bitterly, & so had a pardon. But
living

lying in sin, is that which wounds the conscience, and drawes down Gods judgements, both on soul and body weakens our faith, makes us cold in Prayer, and in holy duties Yea, the wrath of God doth follow such as make no conscience of sin : giving them over to a reprobate sence, to a slumbring spirit, and to hardnes of heatt, that they prove in the end to be past feeling, *Rom. 1. 28.* And surely it is just with God, that he should forsake them by his grace, who have forsaken him by their sins. This is that which the Prophet declareth concerning the secret judgement of God upon sinners, that do make shipwrack of Faith, and of a good conscience, *Psal. 81. 11, 12.* *My people would not hear my voyce, and Israel would none of me: so I gave them up unto the hardnesse of their hearts, and they have walked in their own counsell.* Whence he shews, that seeing they would not be reclaimed and reformed, he suffered them to run their whole swing unto all sin and wickedness. VVe must make hast from
our

our sins, as *Lot* did from *Sodom*, lest we be consumed with them, as the *Sodomites* were ; we must likewise make haste to repent, so as *Zachau* did, who came down eagerly to entertain Christ. Sin is like a disease in the bones, it very hardly will be cured ; for that which is bred in the bone , will hardly out of the flesh ; repentance is not so soon gotten as we imagine, it is dangerous to defer repentance ; for delays in many things bring danger with them. Some think it time enough to repent when the Bell is toling them out of the world ; we mistake it alwayes, for sicknesse may so disable us, that wee cannot be sensible of our own grief : that man that doth forget God when he is living, God will forget him when he is dead: for God prepared heaven for the good, and the torments of hell for the wicked. We must be like *Naaman* the *Syrian*, in making haste to *Elisha* the Prophet ; so must we make haste to Christ which is our Saviour, if we will have forgivenessse of our sins ; if the will enjoy heaven, we must climb heaven,

Heaven by our repentance : if we believe God will punish the wicked for their transgressions, why then do we provoke him to wrath, and cause him to punish us ? It is long of our selves, If we will like *Eſau* spend our time in pleasure, and in hunting, we must then with *Eſau* lose the blessing ; but if we wil hearken to our wife *Rebecca*, which is the Church, she will shew us quietly how we shall get the blessing. Late Repentance is seldome true, though Repentance may be never too late, if God shew mercy. Repentance cannot be good when it is deferred , and put off. We cannot have Repentance in a string, or at our own wills : therefore we must seek and labour for repentance while we have time, strength of body, and ability of mind ; for after this life is expired, there is no Repentance but in Hell, with Sorrow, and Howling, and with gnashing of teeth. We must not like the Papists expect to have a Purgatory, and there to stay some certain time to repent, hoping some Pope or other to be present to Seal us a Pardon, which

which is as much as if it were sealed with butter : Being an invention only to delude poore people of the true way to salvation, and of their mony ; they may as well look for a harvest of Corne upon a hedge of thornes, as for a Pardon or forgivenesse of sins from them. For those that trust & seeke to them for Pardons, do as many men do, who go to a Lottery, and venture a summe of Money to get a Prize, and then thinks he hath amongst his Lots got something, and when he openeth, he finds nothing but blank; just so it is with their Pardons, of no valew, all blank.

Use 1.

Hence we learne what a dangerous thing it is to give any entertainment to sin : it is like to a bold and shamelesse guest, who if he be once invited, will be so hardy, that he will come again unbidden. It is like the breaking in of water, that can hardly be stopped. Wee may see this in the example of *Cain*, who was reproved of God, checked for his hatred against his brother, and admonished to repent, *Gen. 4. 8.* *But he*
heark.

hearkned not unto the voyce of the Lord, but hardened his heart, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of his Brother. This appeareth in Judas; he entertained covetousnesse in his heart, from covetousnesse he fell to plot with the Pharisees, from plotting he proceeded to practising, & in the end he brake out to treason against his Lord and Master.

Mat. 26
15.

The like we may see of Saul, that as he fell away from God step by step, so did the Spirit of God forsake him: For as amongst all the blessings that God doth bestow upon the Sons of men in this world, a soft and tender heart is one of the greatest, which is soon made to bleed, and brought to repentance & amendment of life, Ezek. 11. 19. So there can be no greater curse laid upon a man, than to have a stony heart (like to Pharaoh) which every day doth heap up wrath against the day of wrath, Exod. 9.

Use 2.
Continu-
ance in
sin, most
dange-
rous.

Well, above all things let us beware how we lye and rest in sin. Indeed I confesse the Lord might justly condemn

denn us for the least sin we do commit ; but yet he doth not so much mislike us for sinning, as for lyeing in sin without repentance. When as we sin and lye in sin, then we wound our Conscience, then all grace will decay ; let a man trye himself. When *David* had done this evill in committing Adultery and Murther, and lay without repentance, how was his zeal quenched ? how were his Prayers weakned ? how was his heart cooled ? how was his conscience wounded ? Even so, do but try thy heart, if thou hast committed some evill, either by adultery, murther, lying, stealing, &c. When thou hast done this, how untoward and dull shalt thou be in holy duties, in Prayer, and praising of God ? And thou shalt find even a very Hell in thy conscience for the present, and have no power to perform thy duty in thy profession.

Note.

Vse. 3.

Seeing it is so dangerous to lye in sin without repentance, it is the very cut-throat of the soul and of all good things : O then if we do fall, as the best fall dayly, yet let us presently recover

cover our selves earnestly, repent and cry out with the Prodigall Child, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee.* And with *Peter*, let us hastily go out and weep bitterly, and then wee shall not so deeply Wound our Consciences nor drawn down Gods judgments, as when we lye and snort in sin securely, without repentance. I am perswaded that many men will not goe to bed, till they have summed up their Shop-booke, to know what they have taken all the day, and what they have got; And shall not man do so with God, who is but Gods steward, cast up our sins, and reckon them to the full, what we have the same day before omitted and committed? O Let us do it, lest we be fraight away suddenly by death, and so perish everlastingly.

The fourth circumstance in the Title of the Psalm, is, the occasion wherefore this worthy Psalm was penned, which was this: *Nathan's* reproving of *David* for going in to *Bathsheba*, of which story, read the second of *Samuel*, the eleventh and

Luke. 15.

The occasion wherefore this Psalm was penned.

twelfth Chapters, and you shall see *David's* sin, and his repentance, being reprov'd. Whence, I pray you, mark two things, *David's* patience, and *Nathan's* boldness.

David was a mighty King, a Famous Warriour ; yet, when the Lord's Prophet comes unto him, to reprove him, he takes it patiently, and most meekly endures it. One would have thought, that *David* should have check'd him, and bid him hold his peace, & bid him meddle with his equall. But you see here, though he were reprov'd by *Nathan*, a poor Prophet of God, and that of a foul sin, he most patiently endures it.

Doct. 5.
Ministers
must re-
prove the
greatest
persona-
ges.
1 Reg. 21.
Mat. 6.

Hence we learn in *Nathan* and *David*. That the Prophets of God must not be afraid to reprove the greatest personages ; but they must lay open their sins, and Gods judgment against them. *Elias* reproveth *Ahab*, *Moses*, *Pharaoh*, *Paul*, *Felix*, *John Baptist*, *Herod*, &c. And so whosoever thou art, if thou wert as great a King as *David*, if the Lord send his Prophet to tell thee of thy sins, thou art

att to take it as the message of the Lord, and not to storme against it. And this is the thing which the Children of God desire, to have their sins laid open and reprov'd. *Let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me.* For such smiting shall be good for me. And nothing is more dangerous for Kings and great Personages, than to have their parasites and flatterers, who will winke at their sins. O how had it been with *David*, if the Lord had not sent *Nathan* to reprove him!

Ps. 141.3

We learn hence, in what a wofull estate and condition those men and women are in, that want a faithfull Minister: they live in blindnesse and darknesse, wanting the ordinary means of life and salvation: They have not the words of eternall life, *Job. 6. Vers. 8.* which are the power of God to salvation, *Rom. 1. 16.* and therefore are neer unto destruction. It was a feirfull word, which Christ said to his Apostles, *Ma. 10. 5.* *Go not ye into the way of the Gentiles, and into the City of the Samaritans, see that ye enter not.*

And to the same purpose the Prophet *Amos* speaketh in his 8. Chap. 11, 12, 13. *Behold, the day is come, (saith the Lord God) that I will send a famine into the Land; not a famine of bread, & a thirst of water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord. And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, from the North even unto the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, but shall not find it.*

Oh that wee could consider of these things, and lay before our eyes what hunger it is to want the Preaching of the Word, that thereby we might learn to be thankfull for Gods mercy towards us, to be moved to pittie the desolation of so many of our poor brethren, as also to fear taking it away from our selves for our unthankfulness. Great are the plagues, and horrible the ruines of the Church in many places. Oh that we had hearts to mourn for it, and to pray the Lord of the Harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest

Se 2.

And surely this is a great plague and
judg-

judgement commonly waiting upon great men, that they find few or none that dare admonish them of their faults, or tell them of their offences ; and so many times are suffered to run on still in sin, to their finall destruction. And therefore let us account it as a speciall blessing sent unto us of God, where we have some godly *Nathans*, by whom we may see what is amisse in us. And *David* said unto *Nathan*, *I have sinned against the Lord*. Now the cause how *David* came to commit this sin, was by his idlenesse ; for he being upon the top of his house or turrer, lying on his couch, and not being employed in the Law of God, nor in the affaires of his Kingdome, then came the Devill, and set his heart, eyes, and thoughts upon vanity, and so he committed this heinous sin of adultery, in letting open the eyes of his body to his own will and desire. *David* must no more walk upon the top of his Palace, to view his stately City, unlesse he makes a covenant with his eyes, and shut & keep out those temptations, which at the

first led him to this error ; and which objects are dayly offered to our view. For the acts of sin are one-ly pleasant for the time, and then they vanish away, being rather a burden to us than otherwise. The devill makes men commit sin, by laying his baits of pleasure in our way, making them sweet to our thinking, when indeed they are bitter and full of thorns. *Nathan* tells him, saying, *Thou art the man.*

We can give such a man thanks that will tell us of some spot in our faces : or blemish in our garments ; and shall we envy or maligne him that will discover unto us the spots and blemishes of our souls, which do more soile and defile us, then all the blemishes of the body ? And *David* when he had now found the benefit of a godly reprehension, being reprov'd by *Nathan* the Lords Prophet, saith, *Pf. 141. 1. 5. Let the righteous smite me, for that is a benefit, let him reprove me, and it shall be a pretious oyl that shall not break mine head.* And to this end speaks *Solomon*, *Prov. 9. 7. Rebuke*
not

not a scorner, lest he hate thee, but rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. The correction of a friend is as the rod of a Father, the end is not to destroy, but to save; not to overthrow, but to deliver from death. God hath alwayes his messengers in store to send out to his people to have them repent. God sent *Nathan* to *David*, God sent *Jonas* to *Nineveh*, God sent *John the Baptist* to the *Jews*; and the first vvords that he spake unto them, vvas, *Repent*.

This condemnerh the spirit of the Pride in most men and vvomen: For in these dayes it is come to pass, that great personages, if *Nathan* do tell them of their sinnes, of their excessive ambition, idleness, vanities, uncleanness, and the like: Oh, these hot fellows are not for their humours, they cannot avvay vvith them: even as *Hered* in *St. Ma. k*, Chap. 6. v. 20. though othervvise he did reverence *John*; yet vvhen he came to tell him of his incest and vvicked life, then he must lose his head for it. And as *Ahab* said of *Michaiiah*, *I hate him, for he never prophesieth good unto me*. He is al-

wayes threatning me, and telleth me of my sins, and Gods judgments. So in these dayes, *Nathan* is the odious man of the World; men cannot brook this, to have *Nathan* so busie to meddle with their sins; but men would faine be smoothed and daubed with untempered mortar. But if the Lord loves thee, he will send *Nathan* to thee to reprove thee of thy sins; and if thou canst not finde thy heart unwilling to hear *Nathan's* reproofe, as *David* did, it is because thy heart is naught, and it is a sign that God will reject thee, and destroy thee. *David* did not lessen or excuse his sin, but he presently confesseth them, and humbly begs pardon for his sins.

Hence we learn how to esteeme of a faithfull Minister, namely, as the servant of God; which if it be, then *Moses* must not be murmured at when he speaks freely and roughly: And if *Michaiah* resolve of faithfulness, saying 1 King. 22. *As the Lord liveth, what soever the Lord saith, be it good or evil, that will I speak.* Why should he be hated, & be fed with the bread and

vvater of affliction ? Is it not a reasonable plea, and full of pacification in civill messages ? I pray you be not angry vvith me, I am but a servant. Yet vvhen *Jeremiah* the Prophet shall say, *Of a truth the Lord hath sent me,* Jer. 26. 15. his feet shall nevertheless be fastned in the stocks. Nay, this consideration should not only bind men to peace, from touching and co-
ing the Lords Prophets harme, but also urge them to have them in exceeding honour, at least for the vvorks sake, vvhich is the Lords, vvho doth acknowledge them co-vvorkers vvith himself.

1 Cor. 3. 9

Last of all, this may serve to reprove those that bear the office of *Nathan*, yet have the Word in respect of persons, vvho dare not do their duties, but are afraid of mens faces : they vvould be accounted the Embassadors of God, but they are afraid to do their Masters message. Let such learn here of *Nathan*, vvho feared not the Majesty of a King, but vvvas faithfull in his Office. Let such learn of *John the Baptist*, vvho

did not shrink back, but was bold to tell *Herod*, that it was not lawfull for him to take his brother's Wife. We must not be dastards, and faint-hearted Souldiers, to fight the Lord's Battaile, but first be sure wee have a good warrant-out of the word, and then go boldly into the field, and fear not to look the enemy in the face.

We are not our own messengers, to do our own Embassage, but the Embassadors of the eternall God; when he hath once put his Word into our mouths, wee must go to those that he hath sent us. And whosoever he commandeth us, that must we speak. *Jer. i. 7, 8.* When God sent forth *Jeremy* to Preach, he Armed him thus; *Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.* Thus he armed *Ezechiel*, *Ezek. 3. 8, 9.* *I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy fore-head hard against their fore-heads: I have made thy fore-kin as the Adamant, and harder then flint; fear them not therefore, neither be afraid of their lookes, for they are a rebellious house.* Then

Then hence we learn, That the most effectuall means to pierce and wound mens consciences for sin, is, to charge them with their speciall sins, whereof they be guilty ; not in generall to reprove sinne, but to rip up mens consciences, to come to particulars, to tell men of their peculiar sins and impieties, as *Nathan* did to *David*, in the Parable of the Sheep : *Thou art the man that hath done this thing.* Even so the woman of *Samaria* did but tally with Christ, untill he came to tell her of her speciall sinns ; namely, that she was a vile, lewd, and wicked woman, no better than a whore, or a harlot, and then she was tamed, and began to listen to Christs Doctrine. So here *David* was asleepe in sin, till *Nathan* came unto him, and told him, *Thou art the man that hast committed adultery & murther.* And then began *David* to repent, and to beg pardon. So *Judah* could passe sentence upon *Thamar* to be burned for adultery, but never thought that his sinne had been known : but when he saw the Seale, the cloake, and the stiffe, then he

Doct. 6.
Men
must be
charged
with
their spe-
cial sins.

1 Sam. 1.
Joh. 49.

Gen. 38.

can say, *She is more righteous then I* when he was thus brought to light and his sin laid to his charge.

Use 1.

1 Sam. 11

Note.

Gen. 3.

This may admonish all Ministers of the Word, that if they desire to convert men, and humble them for their faults, then to rip up mens consciences, to smite them, to presse them with their sins, *Thou art the man*. For unlesse men be thus dealt withall, we see that selfe-love will cause men to put off one to another : That is a good lesson for such a man, I would he had heard it, and so cleer themselves. For as it was with *David*, *Judah*, and the woman of *Samariah*, till men see their particular sins, as swearing, lying, whoredome, drunkenness, ignorance, &c. they will not be humbled.

Use 2.

If this be the surest and safest way to humble men, to bring them unto true repentance for their sinnes, then you must be content to have your selves thus dealt withall, to have *Nathan* tell thee, *Thou art the man* : That *John* should tell thee of thy incest and uncleanness, not to storme
against

against it, nor to kicke against the Word. For this know, that if the word of God be not an edged sword to kill sinne, and cut the throat of it, it will cut the throat of thy soul, it will not return in vain. Oh then, would you be saved by the Word? then let the Word pierce your hearts, and wound your souls. A man that is dangerous sick, will open his arme, uncover it, let the Chirurgion let him blood upon a vein, thank him, and pay him for his pains. Well, our souls be dangerously sick with sinne, though we know it not, and we have many a deadly wound, though we feel it not: Let us then lay them naked and suffer the Lords Chirurgion, with the sacrificing knife of the Word of God, to cut and launch them, if ever wee look to be cured. Take heed you be not like unto *Ahab*, or *Herod*, but rather acknowledge it the endless mercy of God, vvhich sends some *Nathan* to reprove you, and smite you. Alas, men vwill not endure this to be said, *Thou art the man*, to be told plainly of their
sine

1 Reg.
 22. 3.
 Mar. 6.
 Psal. 141.
 5.

finns : but it is the onely way to save mens souls. And the least repentance is a new life, and a strict course by circumspection for the time to come, desiring the Lord to forgive us our manifold sins ; which manifold sins are great sins.

And therefore let us all, Young and Old, Rich and Poor, Noble and simple, be content to hear of our finnes, and Gods Judgements against them : For, till that message be listned unto, there is no message from God of any pardon to be given, or mercy to be shewed, though it were to a King : Yet, we see *Nathan* being sent from the Lord, doth first his message of reproof ; and heard that listned to, before he utter any word of Pardon. *David's* attention to the words of *Nathan*, opened his ears ; his intention, his heart ; and his retention, his mind : as it did *Lydias* at the Preaching of *Paul*.

When *David* had gone in unto *Bathsheba* : That is, after *David* had committed that foul and filthy sin of Adultery with *Bathsheba*.

Where

Whence observe the great wisdom of the Spirit of God, who speaking of a foule and filthy act, uses a reverent and chaste speech, very honest and decent. And therefore we learne, That as the Spirit of God speaks, so must we inure and acquaint our selves to speak : Yea, when we are to relate things that are not comely to be spoken, to moderate our speech, and to speak in an honest and a chaste manner. So the holy Ghost exhorts us, that *our words should be gracious, and powdred with salt, such as may minister grace to the hearers.* But as for filthy communication, or foolish jesting, which is not comely, let it not be once named amongst you.

And this may teach us, that we must all diligently study and practice the government of the tongue, to order it aright in the manner : which is a worthy study, according to that of the Prophet, *Psal. 34. 12, 13. What man is he that desireth life, & loveth to see good dayes? keep thy tongue from evill, & thy lipps that they speake no guile.* And to this purpose doth the Prophet

Doct. 7
Chast
speeches
taught of
God.

Col. 4.6.

Eph. 4.9.

Prophet David speaks in another Psalm, *Psal. 39. 1.* *I said, I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue, I will keep my mouth bridled, while the wicked are in my sight.* The holy use of the tongue is the language of Canaan, *Esa. 18, 19.* which we must accompt to speak, but it may be ordered according to the Will and Word of God.

Ise. 3.

This condemneth the common abuse of mens tongues, who do not onely grievously blaspheme the name of God in sweearing, but in most vile and filthy barbarous speech, such as would make any chaste eares to glouv for shame, such unclean, and polluted words from young and old, even from little children and infants, are so common, is must needs make a chaste mind to blush at them. And how could they do this, but that they hear it of their Elders. Parents, and others? I beseech you remember *Pauls* words, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* It is lamentable to hear, that I have heard of your children, most miserable

Ep. 4. 19.

miserable and cursed oathes, and filthy speeches, even of those (which is strange) that can hardly speake. I pray you for God's sake look unto it ; for if you suffer and give them liberty , they will be the cause of your woe and end.

Here mark that *David*, a glorious and renowned King of *Israel*, is content to shame himself for ever, to have his sinns recorded to his own shame, so that he may procure Gods glory, and the good of his Church : For he was confident, that this example of his grievous fall being recorded in Gods book, would turne by Gods blessing to the endlesse comfort and good of his Church. For, what a singular comfort is this to Gods Children, when they shall remember, that the falls and slips of such worthy men are recorded in G O D's Book ? And if this were not, our faith would fail, and we should even utterly despair.

And as it was with *David*, so it is with all the godly, if ever they felt the terrour of an accusing Conscience

Doff. 8
The godly do respect more the glory of God than their own credit.

ence for sinne, if ever they were displeased at themselves for offending a good and gracious God, they will not then stick to manifest their own shame, and proclaime their own folly with grief of heart, with the Leper in the Law, *Levit. Chap. 13. v. 45. I am unclean, I am unclean*, that so they may procure their former peace with God, and give him glory by their repentance, as they dishonoured him by their sins : so that where the Lord doth awaken the conscience, all excuses are set aside ; a man is glad to disburthen himself, by confessing his sin unto the Lord Almighty.

We learn by *David's* example, not to be unwilling to do that which may be for Gods glory, and the good of his Church, though it should be our utter disgrace in the World ; yea, even to shame our selves for ever, so as God may have his honour by us. Alas, wee are so chury of our own credit, and so loath to shame ourselves, that we will not acknowledge our sins and infirmities, though it might turn much to Gods glory : but this
let

let us know, that it is our duty to seek Gods glory, and the good of his Church, though we should even for ever shame our selves to the World. It is a shame to sinne, no shame to repent ; yea, shame is the best fruit of sinne : neither is our shame encreased by confessing our sins, but rather diminished and taken away. And yet so nice are we, that we are loath to acknowledge our sin, without which there is no pardon of sin.

From the persons that fell into this great sin of Adultery, Namely, *David* and *Bathsheba* : *David*, an excellent King and Propheet of God ; yea, a man after Gods own heart : And *Bathsheba*, no ordinary person, but a woman of great name, yea, a religious woman, (as it appeareth) wise and discrete. By this we may see, into how great sins the children of God may fall, if the Lord leave them but a little to themselves ; as we may behold in *Noah*, *Lot*, *Paul*, *Peter*, and the like.

Seeing it is so : Oh, how should we watch over our wayes ? Though thou beest

Rom. 6.

Dolt. 9.
The
strongest
may fall.

Prov. 31.

Use 1.

Pro. 4. 23

Note.

se 2.

beest the child of God, yet see how thou maist fall, if the Lord leave thee but a while : Oh then, *counter-guard thy heart, &c.* Keep it with watch and ward, and look unto the casements of thy soul, thy eares, and thy eyes ; by them was *David* overcome. What folly is it then in them who dare come into any company, that dare pry and look into the beauty of women, as though they were so strong, that they were out of all danger to sin ? But, art thou stronger than *David* ? If not, thou maist fall.

Let all Ladyes and godly women take heed, let them look on *Barbsheba*, a worthy woman, and let them fear to give any entertainment to lust and uncleanness, for they may be sooner overtaken then they are aware of. Look unto thine eyes, and to thy company, lest thou be polluted by the society of unchast persons. Yet, it may admonish all men and women, though never so confident, chist, religious, to fear themselves, and to cut off all occasions to uncleanness : as pride in apparell, self-

self-conceit, evill company, idlenesse, and the like, which be fore-goes of this sin; yet none of these sinnes go alone, but some other sins doe accompany them.

Last of all, let no unclean person, man or woman, make *David's* nor *Bathsheba's* sinnes, a means to embolden them, or bolster them in uncleanness; for, if thou sin, because such sinned, thou maist perish in them, like *Pharaoh*, *Corah*, and *Herod*. This is not the end why their faults be noted in the book of God, for to uphold us in the like: but rather to admonish us of our weakness, to cause us to warch, and be wary lest we fall, seeing such excellent ones have fallen.

As *David* went from one degree of sin to another, so God went from one degree of punishment to another. From sins of weaknesse, *David* went to the sinne of malice; from the sin of malice, to the sin of presumption. How industrious was *David* in studying and devising to send away *Uriah* with a Commission, to hasten his own innocent death, the better

Use 3.

Note.

Apol. Da-
vid. c. 4. l
2 Epist. 7.

to hide his adultery. And therefore David poured out his penitentiall confession ; saying, *Against thee, against thee onely have I sinned* : Against thee onely ; for he was a King (saith St. Ambrose) not bound unto Law ; because, saith he, Kings are free from the bond of crimes, and are not called unto punishment by any Law, being safe by the power of command ; therefore David sinned not against man, unto whom he was not obnoxious in regard of punishment, but of admonition onely and reproof, uttered in the name, and by the authority of God himselfe. Hereupon the Prophet Nathan, having used this preface, (Thus saith the Lord) admonisheth King David that he should expiate his sin by repentance ; but he gave no sentence against him, whereby according to the Law, he might be adjudged unto death : for if Nathan had given any such sentence against David, he should have power to deprive him of his life ; and so of that which he enjoyed by his life, his Regall authority.

thority ; which God only can take away from Princes, because He alone bestowes it upon them. Oh then, let us imitate *David's* repentance, not his weaknesse. And so I come now to the Psalm it self.



Psalm. 51. Vers. 1.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy compassions, put away mine iniquities.



OW follows the Psalm it self, and it is a most excellent Psalm to be learned of every Christian man and woman, and oft-times to be used for our comfort : for it contains a most earnest Prayer of *David*, that worthy servant of God, and renowned King of *Israel*, a Prophet of God, and a man after his own heart.

Wherein he humbly doth acknowledge his sins unto the Lord, earnestly entreating for grace and favour at Gods hands, for the true pardon of them all, and to be comforted again
by

by the gracious promises of God.

This Psalm may be divided into two parts: In the first part, *David* Prayeth for himself, unto the 18 Verse. In the second part, he Prayeth for the Church of God, that the Lord would be favourable unto *Sion* his Church, and build up *Jerusalem*.

The main thing which *David* so earnestly, and so often Prayeth for, is mercy and favour at God's hands, for the pardon of his finnes; and this Petition is repeated again and again, joyned with great affection, and earnest desire of mercy, confessing his sins unfeignedly, and abhorring them.

Secondly, *DAVID* Prayeth unto God for the work of Sanctification, that the Lord would purge him, and sanctifie him by his holy Spirit, and renew his heart.

Thirdly, he promiseth to Preach forth the mercy of God unto others; that his example should be a means, by Gods blessing, to convert them, to make them afraid of sin, and to comfort them that be fallen.

Fourth-

Fourthly, he shewed the great abuse of outward Sacrifices, and the outward worship and service of God; that if it be done by impure and impenitent sinners; alas, the Lord takes no pleasure in it, but hates and abhors it.

In the first Verse we are to consider, First, what is the thing *David* begs, namely, *Mercy*. Secondly, the Person of whom he begs it, and that is of God, *Have mercy upon me O God*. Thirdly, the means and greatnesse of his mercy, *Much mercy, and great mercy*, because of his great misery. And the doubling of this Petition shews, he prayed with great zeal and affection, (*Have mercy on me, O God*) as if he should have said, O my God, I am a most vile and miserable sinner, I have committed very great and grievous sins, I stand in great need of thy mercy; and therefore have mercy on me in the pardon of my sins. God's mercy is the girdle of heaven, which binds and lets loose all the blessings, which man enjoys on earth. *His mercy endures for ever*, saith the
D Psalmist.

Psalmist, God's mercy is a spring, which will never be drye, a fountain that will alwayes be full : his mercy is over all his works. Mercy is a sweet things, it is the Worlds band, which bears and holds it together, or else it would fall into a Chaos, or confusion. To reckon up all Gods mercies would even fill such a volume as this themselves, as likewise his loving mercy, his forgiveing mercy, his increasing mercy, his hidden and compassionate mercy, his fatherly and affectionate mercy. All these mercies of God, be shewed to man, even while man is asleep, and takes his rest : for, doth not God shew his loving, his increasing, his tender, and fatherly mercies, that while the husbandman takes his naturall repose, his corn and other grain increaseth, and growes in the ground ; and all this is still Gods mercy and favour to man, to incite and to invite him only to give him thanks and praise : nothing doth God else require of man, but only the heart : the first fruit of it, which is acknowledgement and confession, that

that he is a God of power, and of mercy, and the Author of all goodness. *David* not only praiseth God himself for his mercy, but he calls on others to do the like. *O praise ye the Lord, for he is good. O all ye saints praise his holy name, for his mercy endures from one generation to another.* First, his mercy in creating us. Secondly, his mercy in redeeming us. Thirdly, his mercy in sanctifying us. Fourthly, his mercy in preserving us from all dangers of body and soul, even to this present time,

Before a man can either crave for mercy, and beg the pardon of his sins he must have the sight of them, he must see the danger of them, and find himself to stand in extream need of Gods mercy. *David* had lain a long time in his transgressions, and never sought unto God for mercy ; but being awaked by the reprehension of *Nathan*, now he cryes for mercy, and God did hear him ; which hearing of his request in Heaven, was an act of mercy in God : For *David* had the wings of Faith, which carried his

Doct. 1.
Sight of
sin the
first step
to repentance.

petitions to God, and he did believe that God would forgive him; as those that have faith in their prayers, their prayers shall never return without a blessing. The Prodigall son, a true pattern for all sinners, he never seeks to his father, till he was in extream misery, and then he saith, *I wil go to my father.* So, the proud Pharisee never begg'd for mercy, for he felt no want of it; and the Church of *Laodicea* knew not, *that she was miserable, poor, blind, and naked.* For how can a man repent of that, he is ignorant of? Sins committed cannot be repented of, till men see them, and know them; nay, nor barely to know them, but to know the hainousness of them, and the curse of God due unto them; so as a man may take it to heart, and be troubled for his sins. *David*, though a Prophet of the Lord, yea, a man after God's own heart, yet lay a long time in sin without repentance, because he did not weigh and consider with himself what he had done. And therefore in the Word of God, the Lord oftentimes calls upon men

men to consider their waies, to know their sins, and the curse of God due unto them. *Jer. 3. 13. Know thy sins, O Jerusalem.* *Zeph. 2. 1, 2. Fán your selves.* *Lam. 3. 40. O let us search and try our waies, and turn unto the Lord.*

Here we may see the main cause, *Vse 1.* why there is so little faith, and true repentance in the world, why men are no more humbled for their sins, and do not repent for them. Poor souls, they know not that they do evill; they either cannot, or do not, search themselves, *Lam. 3. 40.* they never call their hearts to account. Now then, going on in security, seeing and fearing no danger; alas, how should they repent? how should they turn to God? For, if thou couldest see the misery of thy soul, and thy wofull estate by reason of sin; if thou couldest see the number and greatness of thy sins; Oh! thou wouldest even tremble for fear, and wonder at thy wofull estate. But alas, most men are like a man, that travells in the night over a narrow bridge, which is very dangerous, and under it

runneth a bottomelesse gulph, so as if he fall, he cannot escape, but must needs perish, and therefore in the dark night, seeing not the danger, he feareth it not : But let him go that way in the morning, he will wonder at ever he was so mad and desperate to go that way, and will never venture that way again. So many poor blind ignorant souls; when they have run head-long into sin all their dayes, and passed their uncertain life in ignorance, prophaneess, and manifold sins, posting to hell and damnation, not seeing the curse of God that doth hang over their heads; they fear nothing, but run on head-long into all sin : But if it please the Lord to open their eyes to see their sins, and the judgements of God due unto them ; Oh ! they do wonder at their own extream folly, and Gods infinite goodnesse and patience, and would not be in that case again for all the world.

VVell then, mark this Doctrin, do not lightly passe it over, but esteem it as a blessed truth of God. Christ saith, *Luke. 13. 5. Except ye repent, ye shall*
all

all perish. And for a man to behold his sins, the greatnesse and grievousnesse of them, it is the first step unto repentance. So that we see here, who they are that do repent, and shall be saved; even such as see their sins, and their wofull misery, and the wretched estate wherein they are, and which do most earnestly hunger and thirst after mercy in Christ.

Well then, let me ask thee this question, or rather demand thou it of thine own soul: Didst thou ever see thy wofull misery, that wretched estate wherein thou art, by reason of thy sin? what a miserable transgressor thou art by nature, out of the favour of God, in the state of damnation, in extreame danger for ever to be damned, and to lose thine own soul? Didst thou ever find thy self to stand in need of God's mercy, for the pardon of thy sins, and extreame want of Christ's blood to save thy soul? Hast thou felt thy heart wounded and bruised for thy sins, that thy soul is even sick with sin? Didst thou ever thirst after God's mercy in

Christ above all the world : so as thou hast , with sighs and groans , yea , with tears , begged God's mercy on thy knees , as for life and death ? *Joh. chap. 7.* If thou hast not found and felt these things in thee in some measure , thy case is dangerous and fearfull ; thou didst never yet truly repent , the mercy of God belongs not unto thee.

Now *David*, he repented presently, at the very instant of time ; he did not stand to argue the case, but he confessed his sins, and upon his confession , God's mercy did grow and encrease upon him, even as the husbandman's corn doth grow in the ground , when he is asleep. Such was God's love and mercy to *David*, upon his humility. And if we will not repent, and go to heaven by example, we must expect to go to hell with company.

O then , it is a singular favour of God, when he does open a man's eyes to see his misery , to find himself to stand in need of God's mercy, and extream want of Christ's blood to save his soul. This is the beginning of all grace ,

grace, to feel the want of grace. *David*, if the Lord had not roused him out of his deadly sin, wherein he lay a long time, he might have perished in it. And therefore this should teach us all to pray to God, that he would in mercy open our eyes, that we may see our sins, and feel our miseries; and that we may see we stand in extream need of God's mercy. On the contrary, it is a fearfull pligüe and judgment of God, for men to lie and snort in sin, without remorse of conscience, without the sense and feeling of sin, or want of mercy. This *David* now knew by wofull experience, that if he had dyed without repentance, he had perished. Of all diseases, they be most dangerous, which be least felt; as the Lethergy, or dead Palsie, or the like. So it is a most fearfull estate for any man to lie in sin, without the least feeling of it; for then the heart is hardened, and he makes no account of God's mercy. A man that thinks he is well enough, will scorn the Physitian; so, those blind sinners, that think they are well enough, and

D c

feel

feel no want of mercy, of all men they are to be pittied; they be in a most dangerous state and condition. And therefore we see, it is a great blessing of God to be told of our sins, to be reprov'd for them; that so we seeing them, and the danger of them, we may seek to God for mercy. God's mercy was great, saith *St. Augustine*, to the *Israelites*, who gave them a dry land and a miraculous passage through the Red-sea, in heaping up the waters like walls about them; and at the same time, gave their enemies a watry Sepulcher: They were like the Sword-fish, who hath a weapon, but wanted a heart, they could do them no hurt; for God's mercy did defend them, and protect them on all sides. God's mercies are manifold, for God's mercies make a man bold to come unto him. His mercies, they are of severall kinds; every morning, as I have said, God renews his mercies to man; his mercy whereby he prevents wrath, when he is angry with us; then, his meeting mercy to a repentant sinner, and his forgiving mercy, and his loving mercy
in

in giving us life, food, and raiment. Let us not pry too much into the mercies of God, but let us, as he renews his mercy every day, so let us renew our repentance every day, by faith and a new life, every day, and every hour in the day.

Hence we learn, That the first step to heaven, and the beginning of true repentance, is this, for a man to be grieved for his sins, to be wounded in conscience for them. For, till a man see his sins, and feel the burthen of them, and fear the curse of God due unto them, he will never repent and seek the pardon of them. This is that godly sorrow that leadeth to repentance, never to be left nor repented of.

If this compunction and prick of the heart, be the very beginning of true repentance, & the first step to heaven, and the salvation of a man's own soul; surely then, most men be in a miserable and wretched estate, for most men yet, have not set forward on foot, or gone one step to heaven; for they have never been humbled, never touched, never yet wounded, nor pricked in

Doct. 2.
Sorrow
for sin, a
note of a
godly
man.

2 Cor. 7.
10.
Mat. 26.
Luk. 18.
13.

Use 1.

Note.

in heart for their sins, and therefore must needs be in a dangerous estate. Well then, apply this to your selves: Didst thou ever in all thy life find thy heart pricked for thy sin? did the sacrificing knife of the Word never wound thy conscience, nor fetch one tear from thine eyes for thy sin? didst thou never find thy heart to mourn, and to be cast down with remorse of conscience? Certainly, thy case is fearefull and dangerous, thou art not yet gone one step to heaven, nor moved ore finger to eternall life. No, no, thou art yet in thy sins, in extreame danger to be damned. O then, let the

Jam. 2. 9. Word come home to you, harden not your hearts against it, never be at quiet till you can say, I have felt my soul touched and wounded with the Word of God.

Jc 2.

This serveth for the comfort of God's children; for if we find and feel our hearts broken and wounded for sin, so as we mourn for them with a godly sorrow, because they be sins, displease God, offend his Majesty; it is a certain signe we have truly repented.

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ented, we are in the state of grace, Gods Spirit hath met with us, the Word hath not been in vain in our hearts, but hath wounded sin, cut the throte of it. Blessed be God, if thou canst say by experience, that the Word hath been powerfull to wound thy soul, so as thy conscience is truly touched, not onely because of God's anger, but because of this, that we have sinned against a mercifull Father. This godly sorrow ever goes with repentance, not as *Cain, Judas, &c.* who despaired of God's mercy with a desperate sorrow, because of the punishment; but when we are wounded with sin, to mourn for it, because it offendeth God, a loving Father.

From *David's* prayer and first petition, mark what it is he so earnestly craveth, not a Kingdom, nor gold, nor silver, nor the life of his enemy; but, *Mercy, mercy* alone; he craveth for nothing but mercy. And therefore in his person we learn, what that is, which we should most desire above all things in the world; namely, the fa-

Doct. 3
The first
thing
David
craveth
is mercy.

your and mercy of God in Christ Jesus. So that if it should be asked, what we would desire in all the world, we should answer, *Mercy*, and the *favour* of God in Jesus Christ. He is a blessed man that hath mercy. Let other men desire worldly wealth, riches, honour, gold, silver; but, Lord, I crave nothing but mercy, thy favour and loving countenance. The poor Publican coming to God, he knocks on his breast, and cries for mercy, *God be mercifull to me a sinner.*

Luk. 18.
13.

For there is nothing in the whole world, that is able to appease the trouble of a wounded conscience, save onely the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. *David*, no doubt, had tossed many thoughts within himself, when he came to utter this which is here mentioned; he had a true sight, no doubt, of the misery and wretched estate wherein he stood, by reason of his sin. And had there been any other way in the world to have gotten out of that estate, he would have found it. But mark, he casts his eye onely upon the mercy of God, making that his surest

surest refuge, in this his greatest necessity. Even so, howsoever the opinions of men, as touching happinesse, be divers, poor men thinking riches, the prisoner, liberty; the sick-man, health: although these desire all these, yet the sinner ever desireth mercy. This mercy of God, *David*, this sweet singer of *Israel*, had oftentimes sinned, now he desires it. And this is the difference betwixt the godly and the wicked: *Honour me* (saith *Saul*) *before my people. Have mercy upon me,* (saith *David*.)

We learn hence, That nothing can pacifie a wounded conscience, grieved and distressed for sin, but onely the mercy and favour of God in Jesus Christ. Men may in all their distresses go to sport and pastime, and merry company; but alas, this is no comfort to a wounded soul; onely the mercy of God, and feeling of his love in Christ, can assuage and pacifie the accusing of our consciences. A man in a hot burning ague, may taste of cold water, which may ease him for the present; but alas, after it will encrease his

Use 1.

his torment. And as an old sore, if it be not healed at the bottom, though it seem to be sound on the top, yet it will break out again, and become more dangerous and incurable. Even so, when men shall seek to smother the accusation of conscience, to blunt the edge of it; it will after rebound again, and give a deadly wound to desperation.

Nothing
can paci-
fie a
wounded
consci-
ence but
God.
Ro. 4. 17.

Dost thou find thy conscience unquiet? dost thou feel it wound and accuse thee, so that thou canst find no comfort nor rest unto thy soul? There is no other way in the world to pacify thy conscience, and to have peace, than to entreat and beg for mercy at God's hands. *The kingdom of God stands not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, & joy in the holy Ghost.* So that although a wicked man enjoy all the world, yet if he have not mercy, and the pardon of his sins, alas, he shall have no sound peace of conscience, no joy in his soul, nor any drop of true comfort. And therefore let us all seek reconciliation with God, intreat for favour and mercy, & never give any rest unto our souls, till we
can

can feel and find our selves assured of God's mercy in Christ, and the pardon of our sins. If any say, O that I could feel this in my soul, I have an accusing conscience, I feel it terrifie me; I am afraid I shall be condemned, I can find no comfort, what shall I do? Even as *David* here, beg hard, seek earnestly, for so the Lord promiset, *If we seek, we shall find.* And therefore let us pray, and continue in prayer; and know, that the Lord will in the end hear, and grant our request.

The second Point is, the Party to whom the Prophet directeth his prayer, and seeketh for comfort; not to any bald-pate, not to any Saint or Angel. nor to the *Virgin Mary*; but he goeth to God, prayeth to him, *Have mercy upon me, O God.* And he directeth his prayer to the whole Trinity, Father, Son, and holy Ghost; to God the Father, as the Author of all mercy; to Jesus Christ, by whom, and in whose name, we obtain mercy; and to the holy Ghost, because he doth teach us to pray, and doth convey and derive all saving comfort to us.

To whom
he di-
rects his
prayer.

Hence

Doct. 4.
God alone is to
be pray-
ed to.

Ro. 10. 14

Dan. 6.

Plal. 27.

Lev. 16.

31.

Es. 8. 19.

Es. 56.

Dan. 9. 17

Hence we learn, to whom we must direct all our prayers, namely, to God alone, Father, Son, and holy Ghost; First, because we must pray to him alone in whom we must believe. Secondly, God alone can and will pardon the sins of those, that seek unto him for mercy. Thirdly, it is God's commandment, that we should pray to him, and to no other creature. Fourthly, we have promises, that if we pray unto him, he will hear us. Fifthly, we have the examples of all God's children, who, in all their troubles, sought to God alone, and to no other creature in the world, and so prevailed. How available were the prayers of *Abraham*, being made unto God in Faith, *Gen. chap. 18.* that if ten righteous persons had been found in *Sodom*, God had spared those Cities for their sakes? How was the Sun and Moon stayed by the prayers of *Joshua*, till he was revenged on his enemies? *Josh. 10.* How did *Elias*, by his prayer, obtain rain, which had been withheld from the earth three years and six months? *1 Reg. 17. Act. 12.*

1, 2. *Job* 5. 14. *Dan* 9. 17. *Job* 11. 41.

This condemns the blasphemous Use 1.
Doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, who
teach men to pray unto Saints and An-
gels, to the *Virgin Mary*, to stocks and
stones, and I know not what; whereas
the Lord saith plainly, *He will give*
his glory to no creature. Now, that we
may not pray unto them, it is mani-
fest: first, we have no commandment:
secondly, no promise: thirdly, no ex-
amples of God's children: fourthly,
we may not believe in them.

Nay, would we not take him to be
a foolish suppliant, that when the
King's son offereth to speak for him
to his father, would refuse to use his
mediation, and go to one of his ser-
vants to entreat for him? is it not
meet that such a one should be said
nay? Even so, inasmuch as the Fa-
ther sendeth us unto his Son, and the
Son calleth us unto himself; What
madnesse is it then to run, as well from
the one as the other? to go from the
Son to the Saints, from him that
can help, to them that cannot help;
depriving the Father of his honour,
the

Ec. 41. 5.
Ec. 63. 10

the Son of his Office, and disgracing the Saints? Away therefore with the mediation of Saints and Angels, who know not our hearts, nor hear our prayers. *There is one Mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* And 1 John 5. 13. *This assurance have we in him, that asking any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* Let us tread in the steps of *David*, and *Moses*, and the rest of the servants of God, who ever have in their greatest troubles called upon the name of the Lord. And howsoever Papists or Idolaters will be ready to pretend humility, and they will not be so bold to come to God themselves, but they will use the mediation of such as are about them. Yet, let us know, that *David*, when he came to God, he was as humble as they, and far beyond them; yet his humility did not whit hinder his holy boldnesse, as to come into Gods presence. For our humility doth not appear in shrouding our selves under the Saints wings, but by humble and hearty confession of our sins unto God.

Let

Let us go unto God in prayer, intreat for mercy at his hands. Let us not go to Saints, or Angels, or any other creature, save God alone, in the name of Jesus Christ. What father is more ready and willing to hear his child, then the Lord is ready and near at hand, to hear them that call upon him in truth? Now that we may pray unto God for mercy and pardon of our sins, we must be perswaded of two things: First, of the power of God, that he is able. Secondly, of his will, that he is willing to pardon them. The poor *Leper* saith, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* And therefore, that we may pray in faith and assurance, let us be perswaded of these two: First, that God is almighty, and is able to pardon all our sins, though never so great. Secondly, that he is most ready and willing, for Christ's sake, (in whose name we come unto him) to pardon our sins. For if we doubt of either of these, we cannot pray in faith, and so shall not obtain that we desire.

Mat. 6. 2.

Seeing

Use 3.

The
Pope
cannot
forgive
sins.

Luk. 5. 21

2 Thes.
2. 4.

Seeing *David* prayeth for pardon of sinne, and craves it only at God's hands, we see, that it is a cursed and blasphemous Doctrine of the Papists, who hold, that their head, the Pope can pardon sin ; yea, not only give a man pardon for his sins past, but (for mony) can pardon and seal him a pardon of sins many years to come. A most blasphemous Doctrine, and that which opens a gap to all sin, when a man shall have promise of pardon for sins to come. But we see here that the word of God speaks clean contrary, namely, that God alone can pardon sins. *For who can forgive sins save God only ?* And where did we ever find, that God did pardon a mans sins for the time to come but rather threatneth sinners with judgement, to make them beware of sin. So that we see that the Pope is Antichrist, who setteth himself in the seat of God, and exalts himselfe above God, in that he takes upon him that God never did, to give a man pardon for his sins, before they be committed.

After

After thy loving kindnesse, &c.

David being dismayed and cast down in the sense of his misery, doth look up to God for mercy, and is emboldened thereby to draw neerer unto him, and with some comfort call upon him for mercy.

Whence we learn first of all this Doctrine, That the experience of Almighty Gods former favour, casteth off fear, and causeth assistance in God; and is one of the chiefest causes to move us still to trust in him, as *Psal. 4.*

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness, for thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble, have mercy therefore upon me, and hearken to my prayer. Where the Prophet reasoneth from the time past, to the time to come, and intreateth God to hear him now, because he had already shewed mercy on him. The like we may see, *Psa. 22. Thou didst draw me out of the womb, &c.* Out of which words we gather, that the Prophet for benefits past, assureth himself of deliverance from dangers present. The like of the Lyon and the Bear, *1 Sam. 17. 4.*
Psal. 24. 7. We

Doct. 5.
Experi-
ence of
former
favour
assureth
of future
favour.

Vse 1.

We learn hence to acknowledge his great mercy, that maketh one mercy the seal of another, and one grace the pawn of another. Now what man or woman hath not received thousands and ten thousands of mercies, from the God of mercy? All which may be so many comforts unto his soul, to assure him, that God will never forsake him. Indeed, if our own works or righteousness were the onely ground, to move the Lord to take pity on us, then we should be much discouraged in our selves, when we look back unto our lives. But now, the former mercies of God are arguments of further mercies, to assure us, that he will add mercy to mercy: Whereby we may see, how fruitfull the loving kindnesse of the Lord is, alwaies producing more, as one grain of corn encreaseth an hundred-fold.

Vse 2.

Again, We learn hence a notable difference between God and man, in bestowing benefits; men are quickly weary of their liberality, but it is not so with God; the more bold
we

we are in asking, the more bountifull he is in giving; which is a comfort to all weak Christians, and wounded souls; who are ever redy to reason thus with themselves: Will God hear me, or respect me? will he shew his loving kindnesse towards me a wretched sinner? Yea, God doth hear thee; and respect thee, and will shew mercy unto thee, if thou seek unto him in faith; yea, the oftner we ask, the better we are accepted of God; the more we desire, the more we obtain. He chargeth us, *Psal. 50. 15. To call on him in the day of trouble*, and assureth us of our deliverance, *Jam. 1. 5, 6.*

Hence mark, what is that, whereby poor distressed souls, thrown down for sin, wounded and melting for sin, and almost in the gulph of desperation, (as *David* was) that gives them courage, and emboldens them to come into the presence of God; to stand before their Judge; namely this, the endless love and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, even the consideration of God's mercy, that he is most ready

Dost. 6.

The mercy of God emboldens sinners to come unto him.

ps. 103. 8

to pardon and forgive poor sinners, to receive them to mercy: for so long as the conscience accuses for sin, and terrifies a poor sinner, he doth nothing but flye from God, run from him, dares not look unto him, nor call upon him, till he conceive of God's mercy in Christ, that he is most willing to pardon those, which do truly repent.

Now that God is mercifull, and ready to pardon poor sinners, and to receive them to mercy, it doth appear by that his loving invitation, *Math chap. 11. v. 28. Come unto me all ye that travail, and are heavy laden, and I will ease you.* Likewise he embraceth the poor and simple, as lovingly and cheerfully, as the rich and wise of the world. Publicans and sinners are accepted of him, who were contemned of the Jews. The woman taken in adultery, is exhorted by him to repentance. The blind man restored to his sight, and cast out of the Synagogue, is sought out by Christ, and taught to believe, *Joh. 9. 35.* The penitent Thief is by him converted

to

to the faith, *Luk. 23.* according to that, *Mat. 18. 14.* *It is not the will of God, that one of these little ones should perish.* The like we may say of *Mary Magdalen*, who was infamous in life, out of whom Christ cast seven devills; of the *Canaanitish woman*, whom he heard and helped; of the cripple that lay at the Pool, whom when Jesus found in the Temple, *Joh. 5.* he exhorted to sin no more, according to that of the Evangelist, *Matth. 11.* That by the power and love of Christ, the blind had their sight restored, the Lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, the lame walked, the sick were healed, and the poor received the Gospel.

Seeing a poor sinner will never flie to God for mercy, untill he be perswaded of the favour and mercy of God in Christ; and can perswade himself, that God is most mercifull, and willing to pardon them. We must remember ever with the one eye, to look unto his justice, that he is a holy and just God, most righteous, and one that cannot bear with sin and

sinners, that live and delight in sin : so with the other eye we must look unto his endlesse mercy in Christ Jesus, fix our eyes upon that, and rely on that ; otherwise, alas, we should be so far from seeking unto him, that we shall most willingly flie from his presence, as a terrible and angry God, and most righteous Judge. And therefore, as we must needs behold him as a just God , and righteous, to punish sin ; so we must labour to be perswaded of his mercy, that he is most ready to pardon, full of compassion ; that so by Jesus Christ , we may have accessse unto the Throne of grace , and enter with boldness into his presence. And because that Christ Jesus is the *Way*, the *Truth*, and *Life*, let us never go without him in the arms of our faith, and in his name beg for mercy : for, without him, we can find no mercy, but judgment.

Eph. 3.

1.

Joh. 2.1

Te 2.

Cause of

man's

despair.

We see hence the very cause, why so many come to despair, and so to cast away their own souls; namely, because they cannot conceive, that God hath any mercy for them. They cannot

not to be perswaded of God's endless mercy in Christ Jesus, but when their consciences do accuse them of their sins, they presently see, that God is angry with them, that he is a righteous Judge, an angry and terrible God against sinners. And thus seeing his justice and anger against sin, they dare not appear in his presence, but flie from him, as *Adam* did in the garden, and could wish, that they might never come into his presence. They cannot for their lives behold the mercy of God in Christ. Impenitent sinners cannot call God Father, they cannot endure God's angry countenance, but rather wish, they were out of the world, and might never come before his face. For this is certain, that unlesse a poor sinner, and distressed soul, can together with the sense of sin, and God's anger against sin, behold and acknowledge the endlesse mercy of God to pardon them, he never will dare to appear in his presence, but God's anger will over-whelm him. Well then, let us, with *David*, so behold and feel

the anger of God for our sins, to humble us, that we never despair of God's mercy, but still know and believe, that God is no lesse infinitely mercifull, if we can repent, to pardon and forgive us, than he is infinitely just to punish, if we will not repent.

Doct. 7.

God's
mercy,
Man's
merit,

Ast. 6.
Luk. 7.

Mark how *David*, a man after God's own heart, entreats the Lord to pardon his sins for his mercies sake: From hence we learn, That there is no other cause to move the Lord to pity and pardon our sins, but onely his most free and undeserved mercy: there is no work, no goodnesse or vertue, in any man, to move the Lord to pity and pardon us; but all this is of his meer bounty, goodnesse, and mercy, without all merits of ours. As, what could the Lord see in *Saul*, in *Rahab*, in *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom were cast seven devils, to move him to mercy, but his tender mercy alone? Even so, all the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, bestowed upon his servants, either concerning this life, or that which is to come; they all proceed from the free grace and mercy of God

God, in Jesus Christ, according to that of the Apostle, *Rom. 6.23. Eternall life is the free gift of God.* This is confirmed by the practise of godly *Daniel, Dan. 9. 7, 8, 9. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us shame, because we have sinned against thee.* Whereby we gather, that though our prayers be not without effect, yet they prevail not with God by vertue of any excellency that is in them; but because God hath promised to be found of them that seek him in the means he hath appointed. And so for the rest of God's Ordinances, Word, Sacraments, &c. the Lord doth accept them, and is well pleased in them; howbeit, not through our worthinesse that perform them, but for his goodnesse sake that doth command them. For these properties are to be found in works that are meritorious.

First, They must be done by a man's own self, and from himself: but we have nothing of our own to give unto God, for, *What hast thou, that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4.7.* without

him, we can do nothing: it is he that must work in us the will and the deed.

Secondly, They must be such works as are not due unto him, they must not be due debt, but proceed from our own free-will, even such as God cannot justly challenge at our hands. But whatsoever we do, we do it of debt and duty; yet, *Luk. 17. 10. When we have done all things that are commanded us, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Thirdly, the works we do, must be done for the profit of him, from whom we look for a reward. But, *Psal. 16. All our godlinesse cannot reach unto the Lord.* We may benefit men, but we cannot benefit our Maker. Therefore it is plain, we cannot merit.

Fourthly, the work and the reward must be in proportion equall; for if the reward be more than the work, it is not a reward of desert, but a gift of good-will. But, *Rom. 8. The afflictions of this present time are not worthy of the glory that shall be shewed unto us.* So then, they are not deserved of us, but are bestowed on us. This

This condemnes the Doctrin of the Church of *Rome*, who teach, that God doth shew mercy on some men, because they be worthy of it for their good works, and honest life; and therefore they can dispose themselves by vertue of their free will, to move the Lord to have mercy upon them. But we ascribe all to grace and meer mercy; and therefore seeing pardon of sins comes from the meer mercy and love of God in Christ; we must ascribe all the praise of it to God alone: pardon of sins, grace to repent, life eternall, all these come from the meer mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus. And therefore let us ascribe nothing to our own goodnesse or vertue. to our own wit or reason; but give all the glory and praise to God alone.

Eph. 2. 8.

According unto the multitude of thy compassions, put away mine iniquities

AS if *David* should have said, Oh Lord, my sins are many; and great, and therefore I stand in need of thy mercy for my misery, and of the multitude of thy compassions,

Dott. 8.
The nature of
fin.

for pardon of all my offences.

When as *David* Prayerh for the multitude of mercies, for the pardon of his sins ; We learn hence, what an hainous and horrible thing sin is in Gods sight, that it cannot be pardoned without a multitude of mercies : sin being committed against an infinite God, deserves infinite and endlesse punishment of soul and body; and before it can be pardoned, must have infinit mercy.

Sin is odious in it self, and maketh us vile and abhominable in the sight of God, *Jer. 5. 25. Is. 59. 1, 2, 3. Keeping all good things from us, and pulling down all evill upon us, & that the wages thereof is death, being able to press down even to the bottom of Hei.* It is sinne that makes us execrable to the Lord, and abhominable in his sight ; yea, nothing doth more deforme us, and make us cursed and detestible in the sight of God, than sin ; the pardon whereof must have infinite mercy.

Use. 1.

Then hence we learn, that we never esteem rightly of sin, till we come to be grieved for it, as that we find our

our selves to stand in great need of Gods mercy for the pardon of it ; yea, of a multitude of mercies, of a sea of mercies, till we find that we stand in need of every drop of Christs blood to save our souls. *David* having sinned, begs for a multitude of mercies ; and so we shall find, that if we truly were it of sin, that we stand in need of a sea of mercy, and of every drop of Christs blood.

This condemneth most men and women, who are so far from esteeming thus of sin, that they make no bones of great sins, and many grievous impieties ; yet, they make a sport of sin : swearing, lying, drunkenness, whoredome, pride, covetousness, &c. and give them names of vertue. We see it is too common, that men think they stand in no need of Gods mercy ; they think that *Lord have mercy upon me*, will serve. But if we will judge of sin as we ought, we shall find, that we stand in need of a sea of mercy, in regard of the multitude of our sins. *Use. 2.*

We see that the Lord is full of mercy, full of pity and compassion, and his mercies

God, a
God of
mercy.
Ps. 111. 9.

mercies are over all his works. And indeed his mercies are great : First, because they come from an infinite God, to men who are infinitely evil, and deserve no mercy but judgement. Secondly, because for time they last for ever, and never have end. Thirdly, because the mercy of God concernes salvation, life eternal, &c.

And this is that which the Lord himselfe proclaimeeth from Heaven, Ex. 34. 6. *The Lord is strong, merciful, slow to anger, & abundant in goodness, and truth, reserving mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression, & sin.* Again, Mich. 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that takest away iniquity, and passest by transgressions ? He retains not wrath for ever, because mercy pleaseth him ; he will turne again and have compassion upon us, he will subdue all our iniquities, & cast all our sins into the bottome of the sea,* Isa. 55. 9. Ex. 33. 11. Though our sins be great, yet great is the mercy of God in pardoning, Rom. 5. 20. *Where sin doth abound, there grace doth superabound.* Wherefore let no sin so dis-

may us, as to cast us down to despair ;
let this cheer us, that God is gracious.

Seeing the Lords mercy is a bottomlesse sea, that cannot be drawn dry, *His compassions fail not* ; Hence is matter of great comfort to all true penitent sinners. For thy sins cannot be so many, and so great, but if thou hast grace to repent, God is able and willing to pardon them all.

If thou say, Oh my sins are great, grievous, monstrous, unspeakable : Well, the mercy of God is greater as may appear in the pardon of *Lots* sins, *Dauids*, *Peters*, *Pauls*, *Rahabs*, &c. if thou canst repent and truly turn to God. If thou say, Oh ! they are more than the starres in number, remember that Gods mercy is a bottomlesse sea, he hath a multitude of compassions, and can pardon them, though never so many and grievous. If thou say, Oh ! I have lived a long time in them, twenty, thirty, forty, years : look on Gods mercy shewed to *Mary Magda'en*, *Paul*, and others that had lived long in sin ; so that if a man have grace to repent, neither the

Use 1.

Lam. 3.

Gen 19.

2 Sam. 12

Act 9.

Josh. 2.

greatnesse, nor the multitude, nor the continuance of his finnes, none of all these can hinder Gods mercy; but here is all, that men must repent: Otherwise, if men do not repent, the least sin is damnable; and if men do repent, no sin is so great, but it is pardonable.

Yet notwithstanding, men must take heed, that they take not occasion to live in sin, because God is mercifull, and these things are noted as a comfort for those that sigh and groan under the burthen of their sins, to comfort them, and to keep them from despair, that if they be truly humbled for their finnes, there is yet with the Lord mercy in store, whereby they may be saved.

The mercies of God belong not to all.

Use. 1.

Seeing all Gods gifts come from him to us of grace and mercy, even because he is full of mercy, and hath even a multitude of mercies for poor penitent sinners that sue to him for mercy; We learn, above all things in the world to desire mercy, and the pardon of our sins. This we see in the Prophet David, *My soul is sore troubled.*

troubled, but Lord, how long wilt thou delay ? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul, save me for thy mercies sake.

Pf. 6. 6.
Pf. 63. 3.

This is also practised by the Church ; It is the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. Thus the godly, when they desire any blessing, they crave it of favour : If they crave to have any judgment removed, they crave it of mercy, esteeming his mercy above all the world, or ought else they can desire : Therefore above all things in the world, for the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, use all good means to obtain it ; imploy thy selfe diligently to keep it, and to continue it towards thee, that in thy life it may be well with thee, and in death it may not depart from thee.

Lam. 3.

Lastly, where the Prophet David saith, *according to the multitude of thy compassion, blot out mine offences :* Mark that the word (*blot out*) is a metaphor taken from writing Tables, when a man shall wipe out with a sponge all that is written : or, from crossing of books of Records, books of Dehrs, &c.

And

And it is all one, as if *David* should have said O Lord, I have run very far upon thy score, I have even filled thy Book, not with small, but great sums of debt; pay I am not able, no, not one farthing. Now Lord, I beseech thee therefore deface, crosse and blot out altogether the debt of my sins.

Doct. 10
The Lord
keeps a
Book of
our sins.

Hence we learn, That all our sins are recorded in the Lords book: He keeps a bill of account, all our very thoughts, words, and deeds are known unto him, he keeps them in mind and memory, and hath them written down: And unlesse we repent of them, and they be blotted out with the blood of Christ, laid hold on by faith, the Lord will call them all to account at the day of Judgement: *The books shall then be opened*, and every sin, old, new, secret, open, against God and men, shall be brought to light, for they be recorded in Gods book.

Rev. 20.
12.

Now by these books we may not understand materiall bookes, in which men write down such things

as they would have remembred, for God cannot be said to stand in need of any such helps. But because all things are as certain and manifest unto him, as if he had his Register in Heaven, to keep account thereof, *Psal. 139. 16. Dan. 7. 18. Phil. 4. 3.*

So then, we may see, that the Lord doth keep a note of all our sins, and chalk them, as it were, upon a score, untill payment come. It is not with God as it is with Princes, who are ignorant of treasons plotted against them; but all things, both past, present, and to come, are known to him, as well our rebellious thoughts, as sinfull acts committed. And although we do forget, and carelessly mind, what we have done; yet, God forgets nothing, every part and parcell of our debt, being noted exactly in his book of remembrance.

Seeing all our sins be known to God, he notes them down in his book of account, and not one sin can passe him, but he writes it down: how should this make us all carefull unto our lives, that we commit no sin? For if
we

we do, the Lord knowes it, and notes it in his book; and unless he blot them out, they shall all come to account.

A wicked man, and an unchast woman, how many thousand vile and filthy thoughts have they in their minds, night and day? their hearts burn in lust and uncleanness; and these they passe over, regarding them not, making little or no account of them. But alas, the Lord hath them all written in the book of his remembrance; and if thou repent not of them, and leave them, Oh woe to thy soul, when this book comes to be opened, and readd over, and when thou shalt receive *according to thy works*. Job saith, *Thou hast sealed up our sins in a bag*. To seal up a thing, doth note an exact kind of keeping it. So then, the bag and bundle of our sins being sealed up, and that by God himself, let us not imagine, that any one can drop out, but all shall come to judgment.

Use 2.

Seeing all our sins are as so many debts, set down in God's book, and we must come to a reckoning one day;
how

how should we labour all the daies of our life to have them blotted out, to have this book cancelled and crossed, even by the fingers of God: for indeed, we may run on still in God's debt, and set on apace upon his score; but we cannot so fast wipe them out again. Nay, we can never of our selves pay one farthing, or satisfy the least of our debts we owe unto him. It is God that hath written down, that must freely forgive and cancell, as himself telleth us, *Isa 43. 25. I, even I am he, saith the Lord, that putteih away thine iniquities.* Now, that they may be blotted out, and this book may be cancelled, we must,

First, truly repent of them all, bewail them, be grieved for them, that by them we have grieved God.

Secondly, we must beg hard, even as for life and death, for pardon of them, as *David* did here, again and again ask me cy. If a man should run into debt a thousand pounds, and know not how to pay his creditor; his best way were to seek and make friends unto him for to forgive it.

We

How to have the books cancelled.

We are debtors to God, thousand thousand sins, pay we cannot; then let us confesse the debt, entreat him to blot his book, and take that hand-writing, and bond of obligation against us, and nail it to Christ's Crosse. And this is an excellent property of the child of God, that he desireth (after a sort) to come out of God's debt. A true child of God cannot abide to have any thing standing on God's score, for he knows, *Heb. 10. 31. That it is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* So long to defer, till God warn to his Bar. Oh then, seek betimes, and give the Lord no rest till the debt be pardoned.

Thirdly, that our sins may be clean blotted out, we must have faith in Christ Jesus, for nothing can blot our sins, but his blood alone; nothing in heaven and earth can satisfie God's anger, wash away sin, blot out our offences, but onely the blood of Jesus Christ. And therefore let us labour continually, to be assured of it by faith, to sprinkle our sinfull hearts with the blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

See-

(Joh. 1. 7
Rev. 1. 9

Vse 3.

Seeing the Prophet *David* doth acknowledge, that this debt was more than he was able to pay; and therefore disclaiming his own sufficiency, appeals onely to God's mercy in Christ, for the pardon of the same; We learn, the doctrine of Merits, ye, and Supererogation, now taught in the Church of *Rome*, is most false and erroneous, teaching poor people to lean unto man's satisfactions, which they must make unto God, either here or in purgatory: whereas the Justice of God is infinite; and when we have done all we can here in this life, we are unprofitable servants. Nay, there is not that man in the whole world, that if God should lay aside his mercy, and deal in justice, were able to satisfie the wrath of God for the least debt that he doth owe unto God. And unlesse the Lord take pittie on us, and forgive the debt, there remaineth nothing for us, but to lie in prison, *Mat. 28. 27.* and that for ever. *David's* eyes did gush out with tears, when he did see other men sin: and surely, my beloved, his eyes did shed

a fountain of tears, when he had committed that act of folly with *Bathsheba*, he little thought or feared, that he had committed adultery. This act of his was his blindnesse and security at that time. When we lie on our sick-beds, our consciences shall witness against us; nay, our pillowes will testifie, that they are stuffed full of Bonds and Bills, our bolsters with Forfeitures and Mortgages, our beds full of bags of gold, gotten by extortion and usury, our curtains hang about us with nothing but Indentures and Adventures. And do we think, that a sum of money given to the poor, or to some charitable uses, when we die, will serve the turn, to take away, or lessen our sins; or that a few mourning Gowns left in the Will, to be given to the needy, will hide these black deeds, or make our spotted and sinfull souls white? No, it will not. If we would have our sins remitted, and go to heaven, we must, first, confesse our faults; secondly, repent us of our sins; and then, thirdly, give satisfaction for the wrong we

we have done to those parties which we have injured : this is the way to go to heaven, and best pleasing to God.

Take this example of *David*, when he was told by *Nathan* of a certain rich man, which had taken away a poor man's Lamb, which was all he had; and such a Lamb as he nourished in his own bosome, and brought up at his own table. *David* hearing this, said, *The man that hath done this, shall surely restore four-fold.* This was *David's* will, restoration to be made to the party wronged. The like of *Zacchens*, *Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to thee poor, and if I have wronged any man, I will restore four-fold.*

So it must be with that man, if ever he mean to enjoy heaven; first to make his peace with God; then, after be reconciled to his brother, not in bare words only, but in reall actions: and so by this means, you will hide and cover a multitude of sins. Strive thus with thy self, and thou shalt thereby gain thee a quiet conscience, both towards thy God, and also towards man.



Psalm 51. Verse 2.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sins.

IN this Verse, the Prophet *David* proceeds with his former petition unto God, for grace and favour, for pardon of his sins: yet so, as he doth it more effectually, and more earnestly, because his soul was now exceedingly grieved, seeing his wofull misery that he was in, how foul and filthy he was, stained with sin most hainously. And though some put a difference between these two speeches, and understand the former of the washing of Justification, and pardon of sins, not imputing them unto his charge: And the second of the washing of Sanctification, and the curing of our sins: yea, by little and little, washing and purging them away, and more and more renewing of us in soul and body, by the work of Sanctification. Yet, many think the words do both imply one thing, namely, to be thoroughly

purged from the filth and stain of originall and naturall sin, and to be received again into the favour of God, by the means of Christ.

It may seem strange, what should move *David* to confesse his sin, and to entreat for pardon in this manner. There was no Court of Inquisition concerning this fact; there was no Magistrate to examine him, nor Judge to condemn him, he being a King. Nay, no doubt the Devill might set some on work, which might back him, and seem to lessen his fault. What then should cause *David*, without any regard of his credit, to come forth in this manner, and thus publickly to confess his pollution, and to be so earnest unto God, with his, *Have mercy, blot out, wash me, &c*? Surely it was his own conscience, and that extorted and wrung from him this confession, and made him so earnest unto God in prayer, saying, *O Lord take from me my scourge and plague.*

From this prayer of *David*, repeating his request to God so often, *Have mercy, blot out, wash me, &c*. We learn,

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Dost. 1.
A wounded conscience can find no rest, but only in Christ.

Ro. 14.

17.

Ro. 5. 1.

that a wounded conscience, that is truly touched for sin, can find no rest or comfort, but onely in the feeling of God's mercy in Christ for the pardon of sin. And therefore *David*, to shew how he was truly humbled and wounded for sin, he never can content himself to pray and beg for mercy and pardon. For after a man sees his sins, and the filthinesse of them, and beholds the wrath of God against sin, his conscience still accuseth him, neither can he find any rest, till he do feel the mercy of God in Christ for the pardon of them. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* Again. *The kingdom of God stands not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost:* That is, in the pardon of sins, and feeling of God's love. For sin once known, will never cease to accuse, untill it be pardoned.

And this is confirmed unto us by the example of *Cain*, *Gen. 4.* who having slain his own brother, and shed innocent blood, which cryed in the ears of the Lord for vengeance:

how

How did the Lord strike him with an accusing Conscience, that he feared the sight of every Creature, when he had once attained the sight of his sin? And whereas he thought to build him a City, to yeeld him comfort and safety; even there did the justice of God overtake him, and he was driven from his enterprize. The like we may see in *Belshazzar*, *Dan. 5, 6.* when there appeared fingers of a mans hand upon the wall, his thoughts were troubled, and his knees smote one against the other. According to that punishment the Lord foretold: *Levit. 26. I will send even a fainnesse into their hearts; and the sound of a lease shaken, shall chase them; and they shal flye as from a sword, though none pursue them.* So that if it were possible to escape all apprehension and accusation in the world; yet, a mans own Conscience would arrest and condemn him, even hale him unto judgment.

Seeing this is the nature of sin, that being known, it will never cease to accuse and vex the Conscience of a

poor sinner, till it be pardoned; it should provoke us all that feel the smart of sin, never to give the Lord any rest, untill we have pardon granted: But, as *David* did here, pray again and again for mercy, and favour, and reconciliation with God, and never leave the Lord, till we obtain mercy and favour, and till we have got some comfortable perswasion of God's love in Christ, for the pardon of our sins; for till we do so, we shall never have peace, nor quietnesse of conscience; we shall never have sound comfort and joy in God's Spirit, but ever anguish and dolour, sorrow and heavinesse: yea, either we shall grow blockish and senselesse, or else in the end come to extream desperation. And therefore let us labour with the Lord, ply him with prayers and tears for pardon, and never let him have rest, till we get one drop of mercy for the pardon of our sins.

Use 2. Here we are admonished not to flatter our selves in our sins, as though no body saw us; as it is the manner of wicked men to say, *Eccles. 23. When they see the*

seeth me? I am compassed about with
darknesse, the walls hide me, no body
seeth me, whom need I fear? And in-
deed, there is scarce one of a thousand
that makes any conscience of sin, so
that the world do not take notice of
it to condemn him. But let us not
deceive our selves; though we think
our selves never so secret, commit-
ting Adultery under a Canopy, or
in the dark; yet our own consciences
will reply, I see thee, and I will ac-
cuse thee: And then, what is man the
better, for having no body private to
his sins, when he hath a conscience
within him, which dogs him up and
down in every corner, giving him no
rest?

This sheweth the madness of carnall
men, when they feel the burthen of
sin pressing them, and their consciences
accusing them: What, do they run to
God, and seek him? No, no, they run to
their sports and pastimes, to Cards
and Tables, to the Tavern and Alehouse,
and merry company; and thus they
think to put off the sense of sin, and
to smother and stop the mouth of
F 2 their

Use 3.

D7 .2
Diffe-
rence
between
the sor-
row of
the godly
and the
wicked.

their accusing consciences.

Mark the thing which thus grieved *David's* spirit, and vexed his mind; namely, his sins and impieties, his filthy sins, whereby he had grieved his good God, and loving Father. He did not so much fear punishment, as this, to offend his mercifull and gracious God. Therefore let us, with *David*, look back upon our Idolatry, look back upon our whordom, and drunkenness, and then we shall jump with God, and say, that we have had no hard measure, when we are punished by any affliction, whatsoever shall happen in this life. If the Lord had not sent *Nathan* to *David*, to tell him how he had sinned, what would have been become of him? For *David* was in security, and, as it were, dead in sins and trespasses; but it was God's great mercy in calling him back. Punishment and affliction cannot come of itself; it was *David's* sin which caused threescore and ten thousand to die of the Plague. Can a stone flie in the air, without the hand that flings it? Or can a stone be removed with-

out

our help? No more can sin be removed, or our conscience quiet, without our confession and repentance. Repentance must first be inward, and from the heart, in sorrowing, weeping, and lamenting, for what hath been done amisse, in thought, word, and deed; and labour to sin no more. Repentance is better for the conscience of man, than cloths be for his back; for repentance brings forgivenesse of our sins, which otherwise would confound us; it brings comfort to our consciences, which otherwise would be afflicted; and shall in the end partake of that joy, which is unspeakable. Saint *Paul* said, and confessed, it was not he, but it was sin that reigned in his mortall body, which kept him from repentance, and from the knowledge of Christ, so long as it did. And though sin dwell in us by nature, let us desire and pray to the Lord, that sin may not destroy us for our naturall corruptions. For, as the soul is placed in the body, so is grace in the soul of every true repentant; and though we haue

Ro. 7.10.

tains of sins, ready to destroy us; yet, let them not make us despair, or hinder us from calling upon the Lord for mercy, whose mercy is over all his works. True it is, that the abundance of our sins, and the clog of our own corrupt affections, leads us out of the way, which guides us to happiness. And though our misdeeds be works of darkness, yet there is the window of God's grace to give us light, and insight of our sins, which we have committed. Therefore, O Lord, suffer *Grace* to dwell and inhabit in our bodies, while we live here in this life, that hereafter we may live with Thee in glory for ever.

Hence then mark the difference of God's children and the wicked; in repentance, the child of God is sorry for sin, because it is sin, because it offends God, and displeaseth him, and not so much properly for the punishment: (yea, though there were none) yet he would fear to offend, & be grieved for sin, because it is sin, and it breaks Gods Commandments. This we may behold
in

in *David*, when he had committed those great sins of adultery & murder & was reprov'd for them by *Nathan* the Lords Prophet, 2 *Sam.* 12, 13. Hee confesseth with griefe and anguish of heart in this Psalm, ver. 4. *I have sinned against thee, even against thee.* All the judgments which *Nathan* threatned against him from the Lord, did not so much wound him as this, that he had dishonoured his God. And when he had numbred his people, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. his heart smote him, & he cryed out, *I have sinned exceedingly, in that I have done.* The Pestilence did not so much trouble him, as his pride against God. And the Apostle *Peter*, *Ma.* 26. 75. seeing how grievously he had sinned, sin denying his Master, *Went on and wept bitterly.* If there had been neither Heaven nor Hell, neither reward nor punishment, yet this unthankfulnesse of his towards so kinde a Master, would have caused *Pete* to have sorrowed so much as he did. And when this godly sorrow is once wrought in mans heart, then he beginneth to repent, and never

F 5 before,

before: the like we may behold in *Abraham*, in *Job*, in *Joseph*, &c. *Gen.* 18. 10. *Gen.* 39. 9.

Exo. 10.
11.

1 Sam. 15

Mar. 27.
3.

Act. 8. 25

But wicked men, they are grieved for sin, not because it is sin, and the breach of Gods Law ; but for fear of punishment : *Pharaoh* intreated *Moses* to pray for him, that the judgement might be removed ; but still he loved his sin. So *Saul* prayed *Samuel* to pray for him, and to honour him ; but still he would go on in his sin. So *Judas* repented and sorrowed for his sinne, because he saw now he should be condemned ; and so for punishment he was grieved. *Simon Magus* prayes *Peter* to pray for him, but how ? *That none of the judgments threatened might fall upon him.*

Cain mourned exceedingly, and cryed out, saying. *Gen.* 4. *My sin is greater then can be forgiven me :* But it was not for his hypocrisie in Gods service, nor for the cruell murdering of his own brother, nor the shedding of innocent blood ; but because of the punishment that God had inflicted upon him. *Ahab* also humbled

humbled himself, and put on sackcloth, as though he had been very penitent : But *Elias* wrung it out from him, denouncing Gods judgments against him, 2 *Kin.* 21.27.

Seeing this is the difference between the godly sorrow of the faithful, and the worldly sorrow of the wicked ; one sorrows for sin, because it is sin ; the other because of the punishment onely : Let us hereby prove our sorrow. Art thou grieved for sin because it is sin ? because it offends God ? And art thou more grieved for sinne, because it grieves a mercifull God, than for fear of punishment ? Yea, wouldst thou be grieved for sin, though there were no Hell, nor Devill to torment thee ; onely for this very reason, because it offends thy mercifull God ? Then it is a certain token of thy true repentance ; & godly sorrow : But if thou find thy heart onely to be lumpish and heavy, in regard of the punishment of sin, in regard of hel and damnation, and if it were not for that thou couldst be content to live and go on in sinne ; surely then it is but a carnal

Wth Je.
Onely
godly
sorrow
causes
true re-
pentance.

carnall sorrow, it is not a godly sorrow, that is only for fear of punishment. And this deceives many a man who thinks he repents, because he is grieved for sin, in regard of the punishment. But the vilest Atheist and reprobate in the world, may be grieved for sin, in regard of his punishment, as hell fire, and condemnation; as *Judas* and *Cain* was. *David* did not with *Cain* say, his sins they were greater then could be forgiven: nor let any sinner whatsoever, when he hath offended God in a high nature, by aggravating his sin, despair with *Judas* to be both his own judge and executioner as he was. O let us never sink under the weight of despair, but confesse our sins, and crave pardon for them at the hands of his Majesty with teares and groans. For the child of God is grieved for sin, because it is sin, and offends God, though there were no hell to punish.

Doct. 3.
Sin de-
files a
man.

David prays, that the Lord would wash him: Therefore sin defiles, and he was made foul and filthy by his sin: And to wash him much, and to rinse

and bath him, to shew that sin had exceedingly defiled him, and stained him both in soul and body, and made him loathsome, and therefore he desired to be washed, and cleansed, and purged from the pollution of his sin. *David* knew God was able to forgive him his sin; he did know, that God was not like old *Isaac*, which had but one blessing left, and no more; no, he knew he had store of blessings and mercies for a relenting soul. One deep calleth upon another, saith *David*, the depth of my sins for the depth of Gods mercies.

Hence we may learn, what a vile, filthy, and miserable thing sin is in the sight of God; it stains a mans body, it stains a mans soul, it makes him more vile, then the vilest creature that lives: No Toad is so vile and loathsome in the sight of man, as a sinner stained and defiled with sin, is in the sight of God, till he be cleansed and washed from them in the blood of Christ. The Leprosie was a wonderfull disease, it did infect the body, yea, the cloaths on a mans back; the walls of the house and the very stones. But this

Leprosie

Sin defiles the whole man.

Levit. 13

Yea, the creature.

Leprosie of sin doth more defile a man; it defiles the soul and conscience, yea, even the very heavens and earth are stained with the contagion thereof, and are made (by reason of sinne) subject to vanity and corruption, *Rom. 8.20.* Oh then, see how vile a thing sin is in the sight of God, that the infection thereof should seize upon the creature, and make them that they dare not endure and abide the glorious presence of God their Creator.

Use. 2.

Seeing sin is so vile a thing, so filthy and unclean, so polluterh the soul and body, and makes us loathsome in the sight of God, so as no carrion or dunghill sends forth a filthier scent or stench than sin : O how should we loath and abhor, quake and tremble at the committing of it ? Oh it is a wonder to see how wary men are to shun the Plague ; they will not come near the place and person infected, but keep aloof off. Oh that we could be as wise and carefull to shun this plague of all plagues, sin ; that is the plague of soul and body.

But alas, poor blind souls, they
wh

who are most afraid of the bodily plague and infection, fear not this wo-
full plague of sin, make no bones of
horrible and grievous sins, of adulte-
ry, drunkennesse, lying, stealing, &c.
yea, as *Solomon* saith, foolish men and
poor ignorant souls do make a sport
of sin, and put on them the name of
Vertue: Swearing, is a sign of a brave
gentleman-like-mind; drunkennesse,
good-fellowship; covetousnesse, good
husbandry; fornication, a trick of
youth; pride, cleanlinessse: This is it
which maketh our Land to mourne.
These men be clean contrary to *Da-
vid*; he thought nothing more vile,
filthy, and unclean, than sin; they
judge nothing more sweet & pleasant
than sin. But if we could see the
loathsome filthinesse of sin, how odi-
ous it is in the sight of God, how it
stains and defiles both soul and body,
then we should hate it and loath it,
more than a Toad or Serpent, and shun
it above all things in the world. But a-
lafs, men sin, and yet see not that they
do sin; they see and feel no danger, they
are secure; no man saith, *Alafs, what
have I done?* If

Wicked
men add
sin unto
sin, and
pay one
debt with
another.

Jer. 6.

Wee be
wary to
avoid
temporal
danger.

If any man should say to any of us
Touch not that garment, it is infe-
sted; or, Taste not that drinke, it is
poysoned: How ready would we be to
shun it, and avoid it? We would not
touch nor come neer it. But yet,
though we tell of sin, bid them take
heed of it, it will infect soul and body,
and unlesse men do presently repent,
it will bring both to hell. Yet men,
even mad-men, desperately rush into
it, wilfully casting away their owne
souls.

Doct. 4.
Hard
matter to
be clean-
led from
the pol-
lution of
sin.

Further, whereas *David* prays to be
washed, yea, to be washed thoroughly,
or much, and often: And more than
that, to be censed and rinsed from
his sins: for a deluge of sin must need
have a deluge of punishment; and
therefore *David* desired to be wash-
ed and censed in the bloud of
Christ, by a lively faith, and a repen-
tant heart. *David*, he desireth that
God would wash and purge him
from his sin. And if *David*; shall not
wee desire to be wished and purged,
who are and have been greater sinners
than ever *David* was? We learn hence
that

that it is not so easie a matter for a man to repent, and to get the pardon of his sins, to be washed and cleansed from them, as most men think it is. *David* desired the Lord to wash, ye, to wash him often, again and again; and to bathe and rinse him from his sins; shewing, that it is a hard thing, to have the spots of sin to be washed out, a hard thing to obtain the pardon of our sin, to be cleansed from the stains and blemishes of them: it will cost much sorrow, many a tear, many a sigh and groan, even a great measure of grief; for look how grievously we have sinned, so greatly should we bewail our sins. And hence it is, that the Lord calling the people to sorrow for their sins, doth not require a light sorrow, or some small measure of grief, but such a sorrow as should even rent their very hearts, *Joel* 2. 13. And the Prophet *David* saith in the seventeenth Verse of this Psalm, that a man's heart must be contrite and broken, even as it were rent assunder with godly sorrow, or else his repentance

penitance will never be accepted with God. David saith, *Psal. 6. 6. That he watered his couch with tears.* Again he saith, *Psal. 42. His tears were his meat day and night.* And indeed, it must not be a small measure of sorrow, that we must shew for our sins; for if we had an hundred eyes; and should weep them all out; and if we had a thousand hearts, and they should all break assunder with remorse and sorrow, all were too little: Yea, although we should even shed tears of blood for our sins, or, with *Jeremy*, have our heads full of water,

Use 1.

Folly of
naturall
men de-
scribed.

This condemneth the common opinion of men and women, they do think it is the easiest thing in the world to repent, to get the pardon of their sins; they think that *Lord have mercy on me* will serve. Oh! God is mercifull, God is mercifull; and so make God's mercy a pack-horse of all thy filthy sins. But let no man deceive himself, it is another manner of thing to repent than we take it for: it will cost thee many a tear, and many a prayer, before thou canst have

have a Pardon, it will cost thee many a sob, and sigh, and many a Oh, Oh, ere thou canst be truly assured of the pardon of them.

How do men deceive their own souls, thinking every little glimpse of their sins sufficient. No, no, every sorrow brings not with it repentance. *Ahab* had sorrow, *1 King. 11. Herent his cloaths, and put on sackcloth, and fasted.* But this sorrow was as the morning-dew, it did quickly consume away. The like may be said of *Felix*, *Act. 24.* and *King Agrippa*, who, at the words of *Paul*, could almost become a Christian; of *Herod*, of *Pharaoh*, and the like, all which have had in them a kind of sorrow, but it was but carnall, the end whereof is death. It must then be a godly sorrow, arising from the sight of our sins, that we have offended a good and gracious God, and loving Father in Jesus Christ. And this must even wound our very souls. as the people of the *Jews*, *Act. 2. 37.* that we know not which way to turn us for comfort.

Let us imitate *David*, let us cry again *Use 2.*

Pf. 32. 1
Pardon
of sin the
greatest
mercy.

gain and again unto the Lord for mercy, let us beg hard for the pardon of our sins, it is the greatest mercy in the world. Good things are not easily gotten; Heaven, Life eternall, are hardly come by. And therefore let us not imagine, that it is so easie a matter to get the pardon of our sins: No, no, we must fill heaven and earth with cryings and prayers, even is a poor Thief condemned at the Bar, he will cry with tears for mercy. And as a poor beggar, unlappeth his legs, sheweth his wounds, and all to move them that passe by to pittie him. So we must cry as for life and death for the pardon of our sins, lay open our sores and griefs unto the Lord, and give him no rest untill we have mercy.

Listly, it may be demanded what washing *David* speaks of here: He speaks not here of the legall washing which was used in the time of the Law; but he speaks here of that washing, which is performed onely by the blood of Jesus Christ, being hid hold on by faith. For, no water
what.

Ioh. 1. 29.
1 Ioh. 1. 7
Rev. 1. 6
Zac. 13. 1

whatsoever can wash away the least spot of sin, but onely the blood of Jesus Christ.

So then, we learn hence, That there is nothing in heaven or earth, that can purge us from sin, and from the uncleinnesse of the soul, but onely the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, being applyed unto us by the hand of faith. He alone is our Saviour, saving perfectly all that are saved.

Heb. 7. He is able to save perfectly all that come unto him. Heb. 1. 3. And by him he hath purged our sins. So that we are to acknowledge him to be our onely and alone Saviour, without partner, according to that, *Act. 2. There is no other name under heaven given to save us but the name of Christ.*

This sheweth the weakness of the Church of Rome, who bear men in hand, that their holy water, as they call it, and conjured stuff, is able to wash away sin. No, no, it cannot do it; onely the blood of Christ can do it, and no other creature in heaven or earth. And therefore, howsoever in word they honour Christ, yet in deed

Dost. 5
Blood of
Christ a-
lone doth
wash a-
way sin.
1 Joh. 1. 5
Heb. 9. 9.

Act. 15. 9
2 Cor. 6.
11.

thev

they deny him, in joyning to the all-sufficient satisfaction of Christ, or other satisfaction : As their sacrifice in the Masse, to help Christs sacrifice on the Crosse ; and the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Saints, and Angels, &c. to this meritorious intercession, robbing God of his honour, & Christ of his all-sufficient merit, ruining from Christ the pure fountain, to the filthy puddle and mire of their own merits and satisfaction. And thus poor Catholique creatures, they think themselves trimly washed, whereas (alasse) *they are not purged from their filthinesse, they are as beastly as swine.*

Use.

Seeing we be all defiled with sin, originall, actuall, old, new ; let us seeke to Jesus Christ, and desire to be washed, yea, to be bathed and rinsed in his precious blood : get one drop of it, and besprinkle our poor souls with it, as *Peter* saith, head, & hands, and all, both soul and body. For that answer given by Christ unto *Peter*, may serve for a warning unto us all : *If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me ;* which if we did well consider, as well

*Ioh. 13.
8.*

our

our own pollution, as also the necessity of Christ's washing, we should answer him with *Peter*, *O Lord, not onely my feet, but my hands and my head.*

Use.

If this were *David's* estate and condition, that he was so filthy and unclean, (having lain but a short time in sin) that he cryeth out amain unto the Lord, *to wash him, to purge him, to cleanse him?* Oh then, what shall we imagine, or think of those, that not once, but often; not a year, with *David*, but all the daies of their life, have lived in the common custom and practice of sinning; that have drunk down iniquity, as a man drinks down water? Their damnation doth not sleep. And yet, poor souls, they think, that if they can have but time to remember a few words in the end, as to say, *Lord ha'e mercy on me*, that they shall be saved. But if it did cost *David* so many sighs, and groans, and tears, as in the sixth *Psalm*, which was but a short time in comparison of others: They much deceive themselves, that do imagine it is so easie a matter to be washed

Godly
sorrow
will send
us to
Christ.

washed and cleansed from the pollution of sin, that have lain therein a long time.

And before we can be washed and cleansed from our sins in the blood of Christ, we must have a godly sorrow, which will send us to Christ Jesus: we must see our filthinesse and uncleannesse, how we stand in need to be washed; and we must desire it, and beg it with *David*, O Lord wash me, cleanse me, bathe me in the blood of Christ. Secondly, we must have the hand of faith, by which we must lay hold on Christ's blood, and besprinkle our souls with it, even as a man doth wash his face with his hand: So faith is the hand of the soul, to lay hold and apply Christ's blood, and the merit of it, to cleanse us and wash us from all our sins.

But alas, poor souls, you shall see many a man and woman that are very curious, and carefull to wash their bodies, and to wash their cloaths, they will not suffer the least spot in them, but look to have them washed: yet, they can go from year to year, with
most

most vile and filthy souls, that even
sink with sin, and never desire to be
washed and rinsed : Yea, many of
those who seeme to be very gay & fair
outwardly, carry filthy and unclean
hearts within : and if a man could
but see into their hearts, and perceive
the filthy spots of sin, he would stop
his nose, and not endure the smell of
them.



VERSE. III.

*For I acknowledg mine iniquities, and
my sin is ever before mine eyes.*

NOW David having thus in-
treated for favour and grace
at Gods hands, for his great
and heinous sinnes, he doth here la-
bour to move the Lord to pittie him,
because he doth now most franckly
and freely confesse his sinnes, is truly
trouched and grieved for them ; Yea,
his poor Conscience is now upon
the rack, wounded and distressed, and
exceedingly afflicted ; and therefore
he intreateth the Lord to pittie him :

G

David's
Reason
from his
former
Petition.

For I acknowledge and confesse my sins against God, in thy presence, before the Prophets, and before all thy people, yea, the whole Church of God, by leaving this Psalm, as a testimony of my true repentance and sorrow for them.

Doct. I.
Confession ever goeth before remission.

Hence mark, that there is no place for mercy, nor any peace to be looked for at Gods hands, nor any pardon of sin, before a sinner be truly humbled, do freely and frankly confesse the same, and humbly acknowledge with grieve of heart his sins unto the Lord : where we are to observe two things : First, the Person to whom we must confesse our faults Secondly, the manner how we must confesse them.

Person to whom.

For the person to whom we must confesse, it is God, as this example of David doth teach us, *ver. 4. Against thee, against thee onely, have I sinned.* Again, *Pf. 32. 6. I said, I will confesse my sins unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* It is true indeed, we may by our sins wrong men, as David did *Urias* : But being in
sin,

sinne the chiefeſt wrong is unto the Lord : The Scribes and Pharisees, though they were corrupt in many things else, yet they held this for a truth, that none could forgive sins but God only, *Mark. 2. 7.* And this doth the Lord testifie of himself, *Esay. 45. 25.* *I, even I am he that putteth away thy iniquities for mine own sake,* *1 Joh. 1. 9.* *if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sinnes.* Besides the precepts in the Word of God, there is recorded the repentance of Gods children, who have humbly acknowledged their sins before God, as *Manasses, 2 Chr. 33. David, 2 Sam. 11.* The Prodigal Son, *Luke. 15.* So true is that saying, *Prov. 28. 13.* *He that hides his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth them shall have mercy.* And this did David prove by his own experience, that so long as he held his peace, *Psf. 22. 5.* and did not acknowledge his sins unto the Lord, but conceale, smothered, and hid them, so long his poor Conscience was upon the rack, his soul was troubled, and greatly disquieted : but af-

ter he had confessed them and repented of them, the Lord forgive them, and shewed him mercy.

Secondly, wee must confesse our sins also to men, and that both privately and publicuely, as the quality of sin requireth, For howsoever wee condemn auricular confession, as having in it nothing but policy, and a rack to the conscience: Yet we do not onely allow, but call and cry for that voluntary confession, which every Christian ought to make to their godly Pastor, of such finnes as disquiet the consciences; and no doubt great blessings, & comfort will follow them that use this godly practice: And therefore, *Josh. 7. 10.* When *Joshua* laboured to bring *Achan* to a sight of his sin, he saith; *My Son, I beseech thee give glory to the Lord God of Israel, & make confession unto him, & shew me now what thou hast done.* Again confession must be made unto men, and that in respect of the Church, that the Congregation that hath been offended, may be satisfied; as also, that others may be terrified from fal-

falling into the same sins, 2 Tim. 4. 26. *Them that sin rebuke openly, that the rest may fear.* And last of all, in respect of the sinner himself, that thereby he may be more humbled, as that incestuous person, 2 Cor. 2. 7. that was delivered up to Satan for his sin, which brought him to humiliation : Whereas otherwise, if the punishment were laid only upon their purse, few or none would regard it.

But withall we must know, that a man is not bound to confesse his sins to the Minister only, and to none else, as Papists would have men to do to a Frier: but he may make choice of any other Christian friend, according to that of St. James, *acknowledge your faults one to another, and pray one for another, &c.*

Jam. 5. 16

Seeing true and hearty repentance cannot go without a free and frank confession of sins, & hearty and humble acknowledgment of them : First, this condemnneth all those who are so far from confessing them, that they are not ashamed to justify their sinne, even to patronize them ; to plead for
G 2 them

hem; as, tell men of their finnes and impieties, they answer, what need you care, you shall not answer for my finnes, take care for your self: so reprove swearing, drunkenness, pride, &c. and men are so farre from being humbled, and confessing them, that they justifie them, and say they do but as others do, it is the fashion, and they are not alone: and this is a corruption that we have all by kind, to dissemble our finnes? our Mothers breasts have given us no other suck. *Adam* our first parent hath taught us *Gen. 3. 12.* when he was examined, he cast off the matter from himselfe unto his wife, *The woman that thou gavest me, he gave me of the fruit, & I did eat:* and so it is with all of us, we are loath to make our confession of our sinns unto God. Mens sins break forth every day, lying, swearing, drunkenness, &c. But where is that man to be found, that hath any care to bewaile himself? all this while that men do not confesse them, they can have no pardon of them, *Luk. 13. 5. Unlesse ye repent ye shall all perish.* Now confession

ession is a speciall part of true repentance. *David* he begins with himselfe: he rips his own bowels first, and saith, O Lord, it is I that have done this wickednesse, and committed this sin against thee, against *Uriah*, against his wife *Bathsheba*; let me and my father's house suffer for it, for these sheep have done nothing.

Seeing there is no pardon of sinne, till we do confesse it, and humbly acknowledge it; Let us every one freely acknowledge and confesse our sinnes unto the Lord, lay them open and naked before him; it is the best way to get pardon of them at his hands. Indeed in the Court of man, to confesse our sinnes, is the next way to bring shame and punishment; but in the Court of God it is not so, but the next way to have them covered, is to uncover them, and lay them open unto the Lord. I have sinned, saith *David*, 2 Sam. 12. The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die, saith the Prophet. When we confesse them, then he will cover them: If we judge of our selves, we shall not be judged of the

Use 2.

Cor. 11.
31.

Lord : Oh then, let us not fear to confesse our sins, and lay them open unto the Lord with grief and sorrow : Yea, let us deal as a poor Prisoner condemned at the Bar ; or, as a poor *Lazar* or cripple, shew our sores, and lay open our wounds, and by that means, we shall move the Lord to pity and compassion.

The
manner
how we
must
confesse
our sins.

Secondly, that we may so confesse our sins, and make such an acknowledgment of them, as may be a true confession, and to bring with it a true and unfeigned repentance.

We must first take heed that we do know our transgressions, the number of them, the greatnesse of them, the danger of them, how they make us most vile in the sight of God, and most loathsome. We must know, that we deserve hell-fire, and eternal condemnation for them. For untill a man know his sin, and his conscience be convicted for it, and withall see the danger of his sin, he will never humbly and heartily confess the same.

I know (saith *David*) *mine iniquity*. So did *Peter*, although for a time he did

did he knew not what, as a man in a Trance : (for sin may well be called madnesse) yet afterward hee be- thought himselfe, & considered what he had done, and lamented his folly with tears ; and this is required of us all, *Lam. 3. 40 O let us search and try our wayes, and turn unto the Lord :* And the Lord complaineth, *Jer. 8. 6.* That he did hearken to see if there were any man that would repent, and turn to the Lord: but there was no man said, what have I done ?

And surely this complaint may be taken too against the people of our Land, or Nation, that notwithstanding God hath cryed and called unto us so often from Heaven, by his powerfull voyce in his Word, by his mercies, and by his judgments, so sensible, that if the Magicians in *Egypt* were amongst us, they could do no lesse than acknowledge it to be the finger of God : Yet where is the man almost to be found that looketh back unto his own wayes, to aske the question of his own heart, to say, *Alas what have I done?* or with

Use I.

David here, I know mine iniquities.

Now there is a two-fold knowledge of our sinne : First, general ; Secondly, speciall. Generall knowledge never worketh any reformation ; For this is found (for the most part) in all men, which can say they are sinners : But there is a speciall knowledge of sinne, which God will once discover unto us, either in mercy to our good and salvation, as here to *David*, to *Peter*, to *Mary Magdalen*, &c. or else in wrath, as he did unto *Judas*, *Cain*, *Achisophel*, &c. to their final condemnation ; which may teach us all to pray unto the Lord, so to give us the sight of our finnes, as that we never despaire of his mercy, that our sins may never rise up against us to our confusion.

Secondly, our Confession of our finnes, must proceed from sorrow of heart for them, with a hatred of them, so as nothing do more grieve us than our Offences.

And this our Saviour Christ insinuateth, *Mat. 11. 28. When he calleth only such unto him as are weary & laden*

den, even ready to faint under the burthen of their sins. And this doth David himself confesse, *Pf. 38. My sins* (saith he) *are as a weighty burthen, too heavy for me to bear.* For when men can runne away with their sinnes, as though they were as light as a feather, it is an evident token they were never thoroughly humbled for them.

Thirdly, it must be frank and free, not wrung out by compulsion, as sometimes a wicked man, sometimes under the rod may confesse his sinnes, as *Pharaoh, Judas*, and the like: But this confession was only by compulsion wrung out of them; it came not from any sorrow or hatred of sin, but for fear of judgment and punishment. But we must be as forward and as ready to confesse them, to the glory of God, as we were to commit them to his dishonour. Thus did David confesse his sin, *Pf. 32. 5. I acknowledg'd my sin unto thee, & mine iniquities have I not hid. Nathan told David he had sinned; which words stole secretly into his heart: for till he had notice of it, he could not shed*

Excd. 10
17

tear ; for he thought all was safe and secure. It was Gods love to *David* that the Prophets motion should so rouse & stir up such a King as *David* was, to make him dethrone himselfe, and forsake his Scepter, and beat his breast, saying, *I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me.* It must be without all excuse or lessening of our sins ; we may not mince them, or excuse them, nor dissemble them, nor cloak them ; but lay them open in their colours, rather aggravating them ; than diminishing them, as sometimes *St. Austin* did.

Fourthly, we must confesse our sins with purpose to forsake them, according unto that of the Prophet, *Is. 55. Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the ungodly man his own imagination, and return unto the Lord.*

There must be in us a desire to forsake all our sins, and every wicked way, else there's no true repentance : For one sin is a sufficient hold for Satan, and a sufficient bar to keep out Christ Jesus, as we may see by the example of *Herod, Mr. 6. Judas, &c.*

This shews, that most men and women do not truly repent ; for though they can say, *God be merciful unto us, we are all sinners* ; yet in particular they see it not ; no, they think they keep the Commandements of God ; a man can very hardly perswade them, that they break any of the Commandements in particular ; although in generall, and in a confused manner, they confesse themselves to be sinners, yet in particular they do not so : Nay, they are so far from aggravating their sins, that they rather extenuate them by all means possible ; *I am not alone, nor I am not the first nor I hope I shall not be the last*. For any grief or sorrow for sin, it is as far from them, as they are far from it.

This sheweth, that those who though they confesse themselves sinners, yea, in particular ; yet because they do it not with feeling, with hatred and detestation of sin, the more they be faulty. For we should even with right sorrowfull hearts, and wounded souls, confesse our sins, with the greatest hatred of them as

Is. 2.

possibly we can : so, as often as we speak of them, it should make our hearts to yearn, and teares to stand in our eyes.

But most of all, are here condemned those vile beasts and filthy sinners, who are so far from speaking of their filthy and beastly sins with hatred and dislike, that they do in bravery speak of them, with a kind of joy and delight. Now who would ever think a man to be so vile, to brag of his own shame, and boast of his own filthinesse ? If a Prisoner going in the way to the Gallowes, should then brag of his robberies and villanies, and be proud of his halter, what a desperate thing were that ? And yet such filthy beasts there be in the world, who are not ashamed to boast of their own shame and filthinesse ; to talk, yea to glory of their own uncleannesse, and of their filthy drunkennesse ; how they have drunk their share of so many quarts of wine, how they have made so many drunk. O wretched men ! it is a wonder that the house falleth not on them, as it did

did on the *Philistens* ; or that God raineth not fire and brimstone from Heaven to consume them, as *Sadome* was, or smite them dead like *Herod*.

And my sin is ever before mine eyes.

David having shewed, how that he had freely confessed and acknowledged his sins unto the Lord, here he sheweth the cause which moved him so humbly to acknowledge the same : Namely, because they were ever in his sight, and before his eyes : as if he would have said, howsoever I have a long time continued and lay secure in sinnes, and did not know or see the danger of them ; yet now, being told of them, by the prophet, I see them, and so behold them, that my Conscience accuses me of them, and I can have no rest, but my wounded Conscience doth urge me, and compell me to confesse my sinnes to thee, desiring thee, O Lord, to chasten me as a Son, but do not disinherit me for my disobedience, in having committed these hainous sins, and offences against thee.

Cause
that mo-
ved Da-
vid to
confesse
his sin.

Where

Where first of all wee may behold the dangerous effect of sin. When the Devill tempts a man unto it, hee doth ever obscure the misery of sin, the curse of God due to sin, the torments of Hell, and the damnation of body and soul in Hell-fire for evermore : these things the Devill doth labour to keep from mans eyes, tuzing onely in their eares the profit of Sin, Gain, Commodity, Pleasure, delight, and sweetnesse of sin, that so shewing them onely the golden baire of sin, and hiding the poysoned hook, he might move men to run head-long into all sin ? But when Satan gets his purpose, and men be in his snare, and fallen into sin ; Oh how will he then presse their poor consciences ? then he will load them, and set out their sins to the full, in a most ugly forre : Nothing then but Hell-fire, damnation, and the curse of God, that so if it be possible, he may draw them into the gulf of despair, or like *Jobs* wife, say to them, *Curse God and dye.*

Oh that men would consider this in time, how sin will one day charge

her countenance, however it cometh at first in a flattering forme, pretending nothing but friendship, but in the end will leave a sting behind it, even a guilty Conscience, terrour of mind, and anguish of spirit. Wherefore let us flye from sin, as from the biting of a Serpent, that we be not stung therewith unto eternall death, knowing, *the wages of sin is death.*

Whereas *David's* sins being alwaies before him, did urge him to confesse them; yea, to repent, and begge the pardon of them: We learn, that the remembrance of our sinnes, and the calling them to mind, together with a conscience accusing for them, is the way and meanes to come to true repentance, to make a man confesse them, and beg the pardon of them: Whereas if they slip out of our mind, or we know them not, or we finde not our consciences to accuse us of them, alas, we can neither confesse them, nor truly be humbled, and begge the pardon of them. And therefore *David* confesseth here, that by reason his sinnes were ever before him, he

was

Ro. 6.23

Doct.

An accusing conscience, the means to bring us to repentance.

was continually vexed and tormented with the horrou of them ; his conscience still accused and troubled him, and therefore he is constrained and urged humbly to confesse them, and to begge the pardon of them at Gods hands. For indeed, repentance is as necessary and as comfortable to a sinner, as a Couch to a weary Travel-ler, or as meat to the hungry stomack. Whereas the wrath of God doth ever follow such as have sleepy and drowzy consciences, giving them over to a reprobate sense, to a slumbring spirit, and to hardnesse of the heart, that they fall to be past feeling, and cannot repent, Ro. 1. 28. *Such as regarded not to know God, he gave them up to their hearts lust, unto all uncleannesse, and punished one sin with another.* And surely it is just with God, that he should forsake us with his grace, that have forsaken him by our sins ; according to that of the Prophet, Ps. 11. *My people would not hear my voyce, and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto the hardnesse of their hearts, and they have walked in their own Counsell.*

So that hence wee learn, that a man will never repent truly of his sins, seek to God for pardon, Neither is there any other way or meanes to be reconciled to God, but this, to feel the weight and burthen of his sinnes, and feeling his Conscience to accuse him, to vex and wound him, till he find God to be mercifull, and reconciled unto him for the pardon of them, and the appeasing and quiering of the Conscience. And therefore Knowledge must goe before Repentance: to know, as *Nathan* told *David*, what great sins we have committed, *St. Austin* saith, that many men lose their strength, because they do depend upon their own strength, & if we withdraw our obedience from God, he will withdraw his blessing from us, and then we run head-long into all kind of sin, and so wound our consciences, that we are never at rest.

Seeing till such time as the conscience be wounded for sin, and vexed and tormented with it, a man will never speak for pardon? Then we learn hence that no man can taste of the
sweet

Sight of
sin first
step to
Repentance.

ps. 6. 32.
Acts. 2. 3.

Such
may sus-
pect their
Repent-
ance,
who feel
no sin to
wound
their con-
sciences.

sweetnesse of Gods mercy in Christ for his salvation, untill he have tasted of the bitter fruit of sinne, and of a wounded and distressed Conscience, Looke on *Pharaoh*, & the *Jewes*. And as for those that would taste of Gods mercy, and yet are loath to feele the smart of sin, they deceive themselves. We see that ere the body be purged, men must take bitter pills, or bitter potions : And as for those who never felt any such grief nor wound of conscience, no such astonishment for their sins, they may justly fear their repentance is not sound, that they have not as yet been truly humbled : For it is certain, that before we can truly repent, and be reconciled to God, we must have the feeling of the smart of sin, and find our hearts troubled, and our consciences wounded. *David* by his repentance made a breach, and by his true contrition pulled down the strong hold of Sin, and Satan, which the Devill and his Legions of fiends had raised in him, for saith he, *My sin is ever before me* : for indeed all our repentance proceeds from Gods grace ;

grace, for we cannot repent when we would, or have it by nature ; and the soul which lyes dead in sin, can no more perform true repentance, than the body in the grave can dispose it selfe, to the last resurrection. It is the Lord only which plows up the furrows of our hearts ; that is, humbles us with a sense of his displeasure, as he did *David* ; therefore the root of repentance is God, and his proceeding is by his two hands, Justice and Mercy, which *Jeremy* calls the Hammer and fire by which the Lord works the soul, and makes it capable of eterna'l life, & union with Christ : all this *David* did strive for, and he watted his eyes by day, and his Couch by night with his tears of true repentance,

This confutes that fond and foolish opinion of many in the World, who if they see any wounded for sin, distressed in soul, crying out of his misery, and feeling his Conscience exceedingly terrified, and begins to despair of Gods mercy : What doe men judge of such a man ? surely that
it

it is nothing but Melancholly and dumpishnesse, and therefore they counsel him to be jocund, to goe to merry company, to put away such odd conceits, such vain and foolish fancies; but alas poor soules, they consider not that it is the speciall worke of God, wounding the Conscience for sinne, that they feel the wrath of God for sinne, and are troubled and vexed for that, and till God give mercy, and reconciliation be had in Christ, there can be no peace.

Vse. 3.
A Dead
Conscience a
heavy
judgement.

We learn hence, that it is better to have an accusing conscience for sinne, then to have a dead Conscience, a benumbed Conscience, a sleepey and slumbering Conscience, a seared and frozen conscience: for if a mans conscience doe dayly bring his sinnes to mind, so that he sees them before his eyes, then he will not only be grieved for them, but will confesse them, and begge the pardon of them; but when a man hath a slumbering Conscience, that is benumbed, then he goes on in sinne from day to day, never feeleth any smart of it, nor ever desires the pardon.

pardon of it, as the poor Jewes, who seeing their fearfull estate, Cry out, *What must we do to be saved ?* So do all wounded consciences, seeing their fearfull sins, and wretched estate, cry out for mercy, and seek for pardon.

Act. 2. 37

Oh it is a sign of a fearfull judgement of God, to have a sleepey, or a drowzy conscience : It is like a wild beast, which so long as it lyes a sleep, seemeth very tame and gentle, but when he is rouzed, flies into a mans face. Even so, howsoever a mans conscience may seem for a time to be quiet, and men may think they have a good Conscience indeed, so long as they imagine none knowes of their sins and iniquities but themselves ; yet being awaked by the Minister of God, it wil break out into humility, as David, saying, *I am the man, I have sinned, & done this evill, and am worthy to have crosses and afflictions come upon me.*

Seeing David doth acknowledge here, that his sins being ever before him, awaked him, and urged him instantly and earnestly to seeke for pardon, we learn, That it is a good thing for

Doct. 3.
Necessary duty
to call
our sins
to account.

for us to call our sins to account, to have them often in mind, to set them before our eyes, the greatnesse, number, and hainousnesse of them. It was no disgrace for *David*, (though he was a King) to fall down at Gods mercy seat, and to lay open his sins, as he did, it was his next way to obtain quietnesse to his soul and mind, and to have forgiveness.

Lam. 3.
40.

First, it is a good meanes to prepare us to true repentance, and humiliation for them.

Secondly, it is a speciall means to make us hate them, and dislike them, seeing the danger of them, how loathsome they be in Gods sight.

Thirdly, the remembrance of our sins makes us wary, that we fall not into them again; but our former falls make us to take heed of falling in time to come.

Fourthly, the remembrance of our sins makes us pittie other men; because though they fall dangerously, yet we know we have fallen as well as they; therefore we hope, God will give unto them repentance.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, The continuall remembrance of our own sins, puts us in mind of God's mercy in the pardon of them. And when men easily suffer their old sins to passe away, and slip out of their minds, they will easily fall into new, and soon forget the mercy of God, and how much they be bound unto him. *Paul* gives this excellent example, who remembering how he had persecuted the Church, saith, *Notwithstanding, God was mercifull unto me.* So that the continuall remembrance of our sins, puts us in mind of God's mercifull dealing with us, and must stir us up to thankfulness.

1 Tim. 1.

For, if we forget them, the Lord will remember them; and if we remember them, the Lord will forget them. This then should make every man beware, how he forgetteth his sins and casts them carelessly behind his back: for this is a signe, that God remembers them, and will call that man to account for them.

Use 2.

This shews the great impiety of those men and women, who seek all

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means

Note of
a wicked
man.

means to put their sins out of their minds, to smother the checks of their consciences by sports and pastimes, by merry company, or by other means, to keep themselves from the sight of their sins. They cannot abide to hear of them by others, or to imagine of them themselves, but put away the remembrance of them by all means possible, by the delights of the world, and by company, as I said before; which is even as much, as, when a man hath burnt his finger, presently puts it into cold water, thinking thereby to find ease; but taken out again, inflames it the more, and doth give it no true ease. Oh! this should make men ever repent, and be humbled for their sins. Oh! this should make them confesse their sins with tears, and beg the pardon of them.

Use 2.

Psal. 25

It must stir us up to the serious and often meditation of our sins, to keep them in memory, our old and new sins, open and secret, even sins of our youth, to humble us, and to cause us to keep in mind the endlesse mercy of God in pardon of them; and there-

therefore we should do well to set some time apart, to call our life to account. *Tremble and sin not, commune with your hearts upon your bed, and be still.* Where David calls upon Saul's Courtiers to fear God's judgments and threatnings. It is a speciall means to humble us, and to move us to repentance, to keep a note of all our offences and faults, that we may ever have matter to humble our hard and stony hearts.

Psal. 4. 5.

We see the cause here, why so few do truly repent, and confesse their faults unto God, and beg the pardon of them; namely, because that their sins be ever out of their sight; though they pry into, and espy the faults of other men, and have them in their sight; yet do they cast their own behind them: and by that means, never setting their sins in sight, they forget them, and be never humbled for them. But the Lord threatneth all such, that if they will not set their sins before them, then will he take the pains to set them all in order before them, one by one; *Psal. 50. I will reprove thee,*

Use 1.

Cause why so few do repent.

and set before thee the things that thou hast done. O consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.

Doct. 4.
Sin once
known,
doth e-
ver ac-
cuse, till
it be par-
doned.

When as David saith, in the confessing of his sins, that they were ever in his sight: First, they all this while grieve and vex him, wound his soul and conscience, we learn, That sin once known and felt, doth so accuse and wound the conscience of a poor sinner; that there can be no rest and quietnesse, untill it be pardoned: for it is ever in his sight, and before his eyes, troubling and vexing his mind, and wounding his conscience. Therefore this made David to confesse, saying, *Thou, O Lord, didst convert my heart, and set my crooked will and wandering mind in frame.* And as it was with David, so it fares with every poor sinner; after the Lord in mercy opens our eyes, to come to the knowledge of our sins, and our misery by them, so as our consciences do accuse us, and we feel the weight of God's anger, pressing down our souls, there can be nothing but hell and

and anguish for the present time, nothing but extream sorrow and vexation of spirit, untill we find some comfortable answer from God, for the pardon of them. As we see a poor prisoner arraigned, convicted, and condemned to death; there is nothing but sorrow and grief; no joy in wife, child, friends, lands, livings, gold or silver, meat or musick: Only the gracious pardon of the King can revive him, and make a glad man. So it is with a poor sinner, arraigned in his own conscience for sin, convicted and condemned in his own soul, before the Bar of God's judgments: Nothing can now comfort him, and cheer him up, and revive his wounded conscience, but a gracious pardon from the Almighty's mercy, sealed with the Blood of the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world.

This shews the miserable and pittifull estate, of many thousands in the world, who lie in sin, sleep in sin, and never seek for pardon, never seek for mercy at the hands of God; and if

H ?

thev

Use 1.
Undirect
course
that
world-
lings
take

they find and feel their sins, then they run to this vanity, to that pastime, to smother the checks of their consciences, and by merry company, in eating and drinking, carding dicing, &c. seek to stop the mouth of their consciences, and to smother it. But alas, we see this is cold Musick for a wounded conscience. *Saul* thought to have prevailed by this, at what time he called *David* to play, and to make Musick before him; but by and by, his wound was greater. For these men that seek by such devices, to stop the mouth of their consciences, they do as a man that is in the fit of a burning Ague; he is hot, and to cool his heate, he drinketh a draught of cold water; that indeed (for the present) will somewhat allay the heat of the disease, yet by and by his fit is encreased, and made the worse.

Use 2.

Let us then never give any rest to our souls, untill we have gotten the assured perswasion of the pardon of all our offences: For, so long as the conscience doth accuse for sin, so long

long we shall find no rest nor quietness : No, there is no peace, till we be reconciled to God by true repentance ; and till the conscience leave accusing , let us never leave repenting , and truly humble our selves for the pardon of our sins. None can forgive our sins but God , all worldly and human help is not to be respected. Therefore we ought to pray , and be most frequent in our petitions , that God would forgive us our sins. Man never goes to Heaven for any thing, if he can get it by human help. When the Physician of the body gives us over , then are we content to become God's Patients.

It is to be observed, that *David*, in the confession of his sins, saith, *I acknowledge my sins* ; not speaking of his heinous sin of Adultery alone, but of many sins wrapped up together from his youth. For he did not onely commit adultery with *Bathsheba*, the wife of *Uriah* ; but shed also his guiltlesse and innocent blood : Yea, with him caused , as it is like , many of his good Subjects and loyall

Souldiers to be slain. He sought to cover his sins closely and securely, by bidding *Uriah* to go home to his Wife, that so the child might be thought to be his. And to all these he added this, that he laid the whole Church open to the Enemy, and to the anger of God.

Doct. 5.
Sin ne
ver goes
alone.

Hence note then for our instruction, that *David* confesseth, one sin will never go alone, but sin goes by couples, by heaps, one in the neck of another; as he that taketh a Chain by the end, and pulleth but one link, all the rest do follow: So, if a man give liberty to one sin, that sin will not go alone, but draweth on another: adultery will often bring murder with it; swearing, lying with it; so drunkenness, whoredom, &c. The Apostle biddeth us, *Not to walk as children of darkness, in surfeiting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* Showing unto us, that sins go by couples, and one draweth on another, and will hardly go alone.

Rom. 13.
13.

It is like a Gangrene or Canker,

it

it fretteth and eateth furthe: and further, the hand infecteth the arm, and the foot the legge, and so one member another, till it hath spread it self over the whole body; if the part that is infected be not cut off at the beginning. This the Apostle doth teach, *2 Tim. 2. 16. Stay prophane and vain bablings, for they encrease unto more ungodlinesse, and their words will fret as doth a canker.* Saint James also sheweth the fruitfulnessse of sin, saying, *When lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin; and sin when it is finished, it brings forth death.* And as sin doth encrease, so do God's judgments, *Levit. chap. 26. 12, 3. If ye walk stubbornly against me, and wi'l not obey me, I will then bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins. Yet if by these ye will not be reformed by me, but walk stubbornly against me, then will I also walk stubbornly against you, and I will yet smite you seven times for your sins.* And thus we see again, how God will keep a proportion betwixt our sins, and his punishments.

Use 3.

Seeing this is the cursed nature of sin, that it will never go alone, but one will draw on another, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Murder, &c. it stands us all in hand to take heed, that we give liberty to no sin, live in none, delight in none: for if we do, we shall surely find, that one sin will never go alone; but let us abhorre all, hate every sin, and strive against all. We see this common in the world, that if a man shall yield to one sin, by and by it will draw him to another: and often (as it was in *David*) Whoredome will bring Murder with it, sometimes of the Husband, sometimes of the Child, sometimes of two or three. And therefore let us be very careful, to shun and avoid every sin, live in none. For though one sin be enough to carry a man to the gulfe of hell, yet one will never go alone by it selfe.

Note.

We may see this in the example of *Cain*, *Gen. 4. 8.* he was reprov'd of God for his malice conceived against his brother; *But he hearkned*

not the voice of the Lord, but hardened his heart, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of his brother. This appeareth in Judas, *Matth. 26.* having once entertained covetousness in his heart, he fell from covetousnesse to treason, and at the last became his own Judge and Executioner.

The like we may behold in *Saul*, *1 Sam. 16. 1.* Who fell away from God step by step, untill the Spirit of God had utterly forsaken him, and he brake out into open rebellion against God Almighty.

For as amongst all the blessings which the Lord doth bestow upon the sons of men in this world, a soft and tender heart is one of the greatest, which is checked, and controlled, and soon made to bleed: so there can be no greater curse laid upon a man, than to have a rebellious heart, which hardeneth up every day vengeance against it self.

VERSE 4.



VERSE IV.

4. *Against thee, against thee onely have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight: that thou maist be iust when thou speakest, and pure when thou judgest.*

In this
verse,
David
acknow-
ledgeth
his speci-
all sins.



Ow in this Verse, and the two which follow, David proceedeth in the humble acknowledgment and confession of his sins: First, his actuall sins, Secondly, from them he commeth to the fountain and originall of all sin; namely, his naturall corruption, wherein he was conceived and born; and this Originall sin he speaketh of in the next Verse following.

Two
Parts.

This fourth Verse containeth in it two parts: First, a free acknowledgment of his particular, speciall, and actuall sins. In the second, he doth clear the Lord of all cruelty and in-
justice.

justice, that howsoever the Lord had not onely sharply reprov'd him by the ministry of *Nathan*, but also punished him, and grievously afflicted him for his sins, in taking away the child that was born in adultery. Yet, he doth acknowledge the Lord to be just and righteous in all his waies.

In the first part of the Verse consider, first, the Party to whom he confesseth, *Against thee, against thee only*; where he sheweth the great dolour and extream grief of his mind for his sin against God, in that he doth the words, *Against thee, against thee*. Secondly, we are to observe, how he doth acknowledge his speciall and particular sins; namely, adultery, murther, and shedding of innocent blood, *I have sinned, and done this evill in thy sight*.

[*Against thee*.] These words are expounded diversly: First, that it is as much as if *David* should have said, Oh Lord, howsoever I have grievously offended, in committing adultery and murther; yet I have so hid my faults from man, that there is
none

none that knew it but thou alone : so that he acknowledgeth, all the sin was against God, because no mortall man was privy to his sins.

Others expound it thus, That although *David* had offended against man, yet he was specially wounded and grieved, for that he had broken the Law of God : so that though it be true, that he had done great wrong to his faithfull servant, and most loyall subject, *Nriah*; yet, here was that which pricked his heart, and wounded him to the quick, namely, because he had offended his most mercifull and loving God. As if he should have said, O Lord my God, although the whole world should clear me, and no man living should accuse me; yet it grieveth me at the very heart, because I have offended thee my most mercifull God.

Doct. I.
A man's
sins are
open be-
fore God.

Hence first I note, That howsoever a man may hide his sins from Men and Angells, yet it is impossible to hide them from the all-seeing eyes of the Almighty. *David* had committed adultery closely, he had laboured to
hide

hide it and cover it, by marrying *Bathsheba* the wife of *Uriah*. But yet, alas, all his shifts and cunning fetches could not hide it from God: He saw it, and observed it; and now *David* confesses the same, *Against thee, against thee*. The like we shall see in *Joseph's* brethren, when they sold him into *Egypt*; so in *Jezabel*, in putting *Naboth* to death: So in these daies, men be cunning to commit adultery closely, and in the twi-light, in a dark corner, in close and secret manner; to lie, steal, deceive, commit adultery, fornication, and all uncleanness. But (poor souls) they do deceive themselves, for they cannot hide their sins from God's all-seeing eyes, night and day is all one to him. Yea, the Lord doth search the very hearts and reins, *Understanding our very thoughts long before*, 1 King. chap. 38. 9. *The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth every word of the mind*. Again, Psal. 13. 6. *Thou knowest my sitting down, and my rising up, thou understandest my thoughts long before; there is not a word in my tongue*

Gen. 37.
1 Reg. 21
Rev. 2. 18
Psal. 159.
Be as
thou seemest.

Or seem
as thou
art.

*tongue, but thou, O Lord, knowest it
altogether.* And surely, when this per-
sivasion taketh place, that the Lord is
present every where, and beholds all
things; there doth Religion, Con-
science, and true Obédience begin in
that man. For he that hath the Lord
alwaies before him, will not greatly
fall, *Psal. 16. 8. Heb. 4. 13.* For the
Lord will find out every transgressi-
on, though never so secretly con-
cealed; which may teach us in all
things, to keep Faith and a good Con-
science; for although we may delude
men, yet we cannot deceive the Al-
mighty.

See I.
Folly of
sinners
described

This condemns the extream folly
and madnesse of men and women,
who if they can hide their faults from
men, they care for no more: And
therefore they do labour to commit
them closely and secretly. But use all
thy skill and policy, yet thou canst
by no means hide thy sins from the
clear sight of God.

Thou must lie, dissemble, and de-
ceive so closely, that neither men nor
Angels can detect thee: Thou maiest
com-

commit adultery in the dark, and under a Canopy, so as no man living shall be privy to it: Thou maist steal when none can see thee; but all this while remember, that thou standest naked and discovered before God; He sees thee, his all-seeing eyes, like to a flame of fire, pierce into thy heart and entralls. Many men, like *Gehez*, when they have sinned, can wipe their mouths smoothly, and demurely say, *Thy servant went no whither*. But let them remember ever, that it is impossible to hide their transgressions from God, though they may cover them from men. But of this, hereafter.

Heb 4.13

This same Doctrine may serve for an excellent preservative against all secret sins; for this is the cursed nature of man, to abstain many times from actuall sins, onely for shame, or for fear of punishment, which otherwise would make conscience of no sin. Oh that such men would remember, that though they be out of the sight of men, yet they be in the presence of the Almighty; he sees them, and

Vse. 2.

and behold them, even in the darkeſt night, and in the ſecret corner; his eyes are like to a flame of fire, *Rev. 2. 18.* And although men may blear the eyes of men, yet they cannot blear the eyes of the Almighty.

It would be an excellent means to with-hold them, and keep them from many horrible crimes, which otherwiſe they would commit. For the Lord looketh narrowly upon us, and ſearcheth very ſtrictly into us; we cannot have the leaſt unclean thought within us, but he, which is moſt pure, doth ſee and behold us. He could diſcover *Judas* his hypocriſie, and therefore called him a devill. He ſees again *Nathaniel's* ſincerity, and therefore pronounceth him a *true Iſraelite, in whom there was no guile.* So that they that commit ſin in ſecret, he that ſees in ſecret will one day reward them openly. When *Cain*, *Gen. 4. 5.* brought unto God an oblation of the fruit of the ground, he had no regard to him, nor to his offering, becauſe the Lord ſaw the ſecret hypocriſie of his heart. And this is the reaſon that *David*

uſeth

useth to perswade *Solomon* his son to have a care to learn, and to practise the will of God, *1 Chron. 28. 8. And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts.*

When as the Prophet *David* repeateth the words, *Against thee, against thee*, here mark the extreame sorrow and grief of *David's* heart, that he had sinned against his mercifull God. What was it that so grieved his soul? The shame of the sin could not, for that was not known but to God only; neither fear of punishment, for what man durst be so bold, as to call him to account? But that he had been so vile and wretched, as to sin against his most loving God; this was the thing that made his heart to bleed. Which must teach us all this lesson, That whensoever we fall into any sin, this consideration above all others should sink deepest into our hearts; namely, the consideration of the Person whom we have offended; and that not simply against man, but against God himself.

And

Dott.
What sorrow it is that accompanies Repentance

The person whom he had offended.

David's
sin ag-
gravated
2 Sam.
12.

And this sin of *David* is aggravated in divers respects.

First, *Nathan* telleth him, Almighty God had bestowed upon him that Kingdom, and the wives of his Lord; and if that had bin too little, he would have given him more, 2 Sam. 4.

Secondly, that *David*, a man whom God had so highly honoured, that he had taken him from a sheep-fold, and gave to him a Scepter; which by his mighty power made him escape the hands of all his enemies, and had graced him with the gift of his Spirit; who had made so great proceedings in Religion, and the worship of God. It could not but cut him, and wound him at the very heart, that he should so wickedly and foully fall into such grievous sins.

Thirdly, in that his example should bring a great slander to the Church of God, and open the mouth of the uncircumcised Philistines to reproach and revile them, as we see in *Shimei*.

Fourthly, in that he had by his sins laid open the Church and people of God unto his judgments, to plague and punish them.

Now

Now from this practise of *David*, we learn that which I taught before, namely, That the children of God are grieved for sin, because it offends and displeases their mercifull God. *David* needed not to have been so much troubled for his sin, either in shame, for it was not known but to God alone; or punishment, for none could call him to account; but, that he had offended his mercifull God, and loving Father; it did torment and vex his conscience exceedingly. So every child of God, that truly repents of sin, grieves more, because it offends God, than for fear of shame or punishment: as we see it in *David*, *Psal.* 129. *I have hid thy word within my heart, that I might not sin against thee.* The like we may see in *Joseph*, *Gen.* 29. when he was tempted to lewdness by his adulterous Mistresse, his answer is worthy to be remembered of us, *How can I do this great wickednesse, and sin against God?* The wrong that he should have done unto his Master did not so much prevail with him, as that he knew he should

True
note of
Repentance.

should sin against God. And the like may be said of *Peter*, *Matth. 26.* who remembering how kind and loving Christ had been to him, even to pray to his Father for him, when Satan desired to buffet him; that told him, *Mat. 16. That the gates of hell should never prevail against him.* The looking back of this his Master, wounded him to the heart, that he should sin against him, so cowardly to deny him.

Vse 1.

Wel, seeing this is the nature of true repentance, of godly sorrow, and remorse of conscience for sin, that the child of God is grieved for his sin, because it displeaseth God, his most loving and mercifull Father, as in *Joseph, David*, and the Prodigall son, &c. Let us labour to find our hearts thus affected, that we can mourn for sin, because it is sin that offendeth God our loving Father: Though none know of it, nor could accuse us for it; nay, although there were no Hell, nor Judgment for to condemn us; yet, that we finde our hearts wounded for our secret sins, for our close and hidden transgressions:

fions; because we know they offend our most gracious God, and loving Father.

Let it be far from us to say with *Pharaoh, Exod. 5. Who is the Lord, that I should be afraid to sin?* Oh know (O mm) whatsoever thou art, that exaltest thy self in this manner, to sin with a high hand against the Almighty, that the Lord is a consuming fire. It is he that drowned *Pharaoh* and all his hoste, *Exod. 14.* It is he that made *Jerusalem* a heap of stones, *Mat. 26.* It is he that suddainly destroyed *Herod, Act. 12.* and sent fire upon *Sodom, Gen 19.* Learn therefore to know God aright, and it will make thee quake and tremble to sin against him.

This sheweth, that most mens repentance is but counterfeit and unsound; for, were it not for fear of shame and punishment, they could be content to commit sin, to live in sin from day to day, as *Potiphar's* wife tempted *Joseph* continually to sin and uncleanness: Alas, she thought not that God would see and behold it.

But

Vse 2.

Gen. 39.

Exod. 10
1 Sam. 8
Mat. 27.
Act. 8. 25

A Simile.

Doct. 3.
A peni-
tent per-
son never
excuses
his sin.

But whatsoever thou art, unlesse thou find thy heart humbled for thy close and hidden sin, and thy secret corruptions ; I tell thee, thou art not truly humbled. The veriest beast and Atheist that ever lived, may confesse his known sins, and, in regard of the shame and punishment, be sorry for them, as *Pharaoh, Judas, Saul, Simon Magus, &c.* But here is godly sorrow, which brings repentance never to be repented of, To be grieved for sin, though we should have neither shame nor punishment, seeing it offendeth a gracious and mercifull God. As we see two children, one is naturall, loving, and dutifull child, and he is loath to offend his father, though he never corrects him, because he sees his father kind unto him. Another, that is of a froward nature, he is loath to offend before his father, for fear of the whip ; and therefore out of his fathers sight, he will play his prancks.

In that *David* thus laies open his sin, though it was secret, and doth aggravate it, we learn, that he that tru-

ly repented of his sin, will not excuse it, mince it, hide it, and cloak it, and seek starting holes to conceal it : but he will truly and humbly acknowledge it, lay it open, and make it manifest unto God. He doth not blame the folly of the woman, nor by any means seek to hide his sins, but layeth them open before the Lord : *Against her have I sinned.* So it is the manner of Gods Children that doe truly repent, to lay open their sins in the worst and vilest forme, to make them greater, not lesser.

Well then, this doth shew, that those men are not truly humbled, neither yet have truly repented, that do seek starting holes for their sin : I am not alone, If I go to Hell, I shall have more Company : It is but the fashion ; and if I do not worse than swear by Faith, Troth, &c. The Lord I hope will pardon me. This excusing and cloaking of sin, is a token of a naughty and dissembling heart, that that man or woman is not truly humbled as they should : wee see this in *Saul*, he was not so far from ag-

I ——— gravating

Use 2.
Note of
wicked
men.

1 Sam. 15

Mat. 15.

Prov. 28.

23.

gravating and increasing his sin, that he found out many excuses : *The people did it, and it was to offer Sacrifice.* So the wicked in their Pilgrimage, are so far from confessing their sinnes, that they rather excuse them. So that it is a true note of a wicked and gracelesse heart to excuse sin, to hide it, and cover it; and he that doth so, shall never find mercy.

Against thee, against thee only have I sinned.

IT may here be demanded, how *David* could say, that he had onely sinned against God? Did he not sin against *Urias* his faithfull servant, and loving subject? First, in committing adultery with his Wife, and then in causing his guiltlesse blood to be shed? how then could *David* say here, *Against thee (only) have I sinned?*

I answer, First, *David* had sinned indeed against *Urias*, and that two severall wayes: First, in his Wife, not in his goods; for then perhaps he might have made amends; but taking his wife out of his bosome (as *Nathan* telleth

telleth him) he could never make recompence : When *Abimelech* a heathen King, *Gen. 20.* did ignorantly take *Abrahams* wife into his house, when he knew the same (although he defiled her not, yet) gave *Abraham* a large gift for satisfaction. What satisfaction then might *David* give being not a heathen man, but a Prophet of the Lord, who wittingly takes the wife of *Urias*, and defiled her?

Secondly, besides his wife, he taketh away his life also : The Devill could say, *Job. 2. 4. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath wil he give for his life* : yet, as precious as a mans life is unto him, *David* addeth this injury to the former, taking away his life also.

Again, *David* sinned not onely against the husband, but against the wife also, corrupting her chaste mind, and alluring her unto wickedness.

And unto this sinne committed against *Urias*, and his wife, I might adde the sin against the Child begotten in bastardy : The innocent blood of all those of his Loyall Subjects that

were slain with *Urias* ; his sin against his own house and family ; as also his transgressions against the whole Church and people of God, laying them open to Gods judgments for his sake. But yet all these finnes against men, how great or how grievous soever they were, he accompteth them as nothing in comparison of his sin against God ; *Peter*, he must have a silly Cock to remember him of his sin : *David*, he must have a *Nathan* to tell him, saying, *Thou art the man* ; and therefore saith he, *Against thee onely have I sinned.*

Secondly, I answer, that all finnes of what sort soever they be, they be great sins, because they be against the Law of the Almighty ; and were it not for the Law of God forbidding sin, and commanding Virtue, there should be no sin ; For what is sin but the transgression of the Law of God ? and therefore *David* acknowledgeth his finnes were against God, he hath rebelled and transgressed his Law and Commandements : he had not now to doe with *Urias*, or any mortall man

man, but with the just and most righteous God, whose holy Law hee hath most rebelliously broken and violated : For if the Lord hath not forbidden men to commit adultery, it should be no sin : And if the Lord had not said, *Thou shalt not kill*, it were then no more sin to kill a man, than to kill a dogge: But seeing the Law of God forbiddeth it, Therefore it is a sin, and deserveth eternal damnation, if not repented of : Omission of the duty which God requires at our hands, is as bad as the commission of the act it self ; good men will startle at the least sin, like *Joseph*, who said, *How can I do this thing, and not sin against God*; God forbid that I should do it ; and as God hath forbid us to do this sin, and many such others so (good God) do thou still forbid us by thy preventing grace, to do it, or the like sins.

Seeing all sin is the transgression of the Law of God, whether it be immediately, as the sins of the first table ; or mediately, when in sinning against our brother, we do sin against God, it

Rom. 6.
24.

Doct. 5.
God alone can
forgive
sins.

followeth, that God alone can pardon and forgive sin ; for it belongeth to him alone to pardon the fault, against whom it was committed ; but all sin is against Gods Law, therefore he alone can pardon and forgive it ; And this is affirmed by the Pharisees , *Luk. 5. 21. Who can forgive sinne but God alone ?*

No creature hath this power: for he that can forgive sinnes and trespasses, must be able to take away the punishment of sin, which is death, hell, and damnation. Now then, to say, that a man can properly forgive sin, it is in effect to say, that a man hath power over Death and Hell, which cannot possibly be.

Doct. 1.

Seeing none can pardon sinne but God onely, because all sin is against God alone; No man on earth, no Saint or Angell in Heaven. can pardon and forgive sins, but only Almighty God : This condemneth the blasphemous & erroneous Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, who do hold and teach, that the Pope can as truly, and as properly forgive sins, as God himself. This
one

one poynt of Doctrine taught and held by the Church of *Rome*, doth prove their Pope to be Antichrist, even that man of sin that the Apostle speaketh of, who makes himself equall to God. And as Almighty God can forgive sin, so will his Holiness forgive sin : and whereas God never give any sinner pardon of his sinnes, before they were committed and repented; yet the Pope can, and doth give out his pardons for a sum of mony, for sins past, present, yea, for twenty years to come; for treason, for murder, adultery, yea, any sin. Than which, what can be more blasphemous and dangerous, to give men licence to commit sin, and open a gap to all manner of villany ? For who will be afraid to sin, if he may have a pardon for sin before it be committed.

Therefore when we have committed a sin, let us not think to flye from God as from a temporall Judge ; No rather run we unto him by our confessing and acknowledging our sinnes, and then he will forgive us our sinnes ; for he that hides his sinne, shall not

Pope Antichrist

Horrible impiety.

prosper ; but he that confesseth his sin shall find mercy. We have too little shame in us when we commit sin, and too much shame in us when we confesse it : For without confession, repentance is but a dumb shew ; for our confession is a glory to God, and much honour we do unto him by our confession ; but so long as we do not confesse our sins, we are aliens and strangers at the Throne of grace & mercy Wee must be humbled before we can be honoured ; we must be broken by our repentance, before we can be made vessels of glory. There is commonly a disease, before there can be a cure. All the holy men of God still confessed their sins, before they found favour at Gods hand. *David's* confession was from his heart, it was really, and a true saying, *I have sinned* : For confession without sorrow of heart, is but lip-labour ; so the ear without observing, is but ear-service ; and charity without the heart, is but hand labour. The Psalmist saith plainly, that *he that doth not confesse his sins, shall not prosper* : I say, those that will not repent

and confesse their sins while they live, shall one day come with shame in their faces, crying to the hills to cover them, and the rocks to fall upon them with fear in their hearts, and a guilty conscience in their bosomes.

Seeing *David* confesseth that he had sinned against God alone, he doth acknowledge, though all men should pardon his sins, & wink at them, yea, should seek to flatter him being a King, yet he could not be so satisfied, because the sin was against Gods laws and Commandements; And therefore he seeketh to God for pardon: So when we sin against men, offend our neighbour and brother by lying, adultery, murder, &c. Yet let us know we have to do with God, and though all men should pardon us, and connive at our sin, yet unless the Lord seele our pardon, it is not worth a button. V When great men sin by adultery and murder, by oppression & cruelty, they have their claw-backs and flatterers, who will smooch and flatter them, lessen and excuse their sins, yea, say all is well done; but alas, when the Law

of God is broken ; unlesse he pardon all the flattering and smoothing of men is nothing worth : And let us remember, that though wee pass by our sins, that they are forgotten ; yet they are not like our feeble bodies , which grow weaker and weaker, but they grow, and increase, and in time will reach up to Heaven, and cry for vengeance against us.

Use 3.

Rom. 12.

19.

Seeing all sin, (to speak properly) is against God, because it is the breach of his Law, therefore it followeth, that all the punishing of sin belongs onely to God : He alone is the revenger of sin: *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay u:* where the Apostle sheweth, that all punishing and revenging of sin belongs to the Lord alone, because that God alone is the person which is wronged and injured: and not man (to speak properly) seeing not mans law, but Gods law is violated & broken ; And if his law were not broken, no man, nor any other Creature should have the least cause to complain; and therefore all punishing and vengeance for sin
be-

belongeth properly to God, and unto such whom he shall appoynt to be his Lieutenants on earth, and Ministers to stand in his stead to punish offences.

And therefore first this sheweth, that those men do much offend, who when the Law of God is broken by wicked and ungodly men, can winke at their sins, and will not unsheath the Sword put into their hands, to the end to smite the same ; but can suffer many great and horrible sins to be committed, that the Lord himself many times is faine by the sword, plague, pestilence, or otherwise, to execute judgement on ungodly men, sweeping them away by heaps.

This practice of *David* condemns the common practice of the world : If men do sin, and do some evill that is known to the World, what do they then ? They presently seek to pacifie the party offended, to stay his displeasure, either by money, or by friends, or by some other means : But alas, they regard not the anger of God, whose Majesty is offended, and his Law transgressed. But *David* here

Use 4.

acknowledgeth, that he had not to do with man, but with God, whose most holy and righteous Law he had broken. And although all men would willingly have pardoned the fault, yet that could not content him, till he had gotten the pardon of God, sealed in the blood of Christ Jesus. So let us, though we must and may labour to be reconciled to men, yet let us look up higher to the hand of God, to be reconciled unto him, to beg pardon at his hands, and to be at one with him. Alas, what shall it boot us to get the Kings pardon for murder, adultery, theft, &c. if the King of heaven pardon not, and do not forgive the same? What if we can appease the anger of man, and be in danger of the just and severe anger of the eternal and everlasting God? And therefore let us go to God, fly unto him, labour for reconciliation with him. For *David's* sins were seen with the eye of Gods providence, and with the eye of justice; for it was Gods love to him, to send him this Prophet. to let him know that he had done wicked-

Note.

ly, there was Gods favour : then to tell him he would punish him and his people, there was his justice. *David*, after he had cast his eye upon *Bathsheba*, did so study and labour to get her to his will, even as a man in the summer-time, that will spend a whole day to get a Butter-flye, which obtained, is not worth a mans paines. So it was with *David*, nothing but sorrow came after, nor any quiet rest he found, till he came to ask pardon. He lay, as I said before, ten months in this sleep of sin, which *St. Bernard* said was a brother to death : But when he knew his errour, he was then glad, and said, the Lord had heard the voyce of my weeping ; his former mirth is now turned into a river of tears ; his sin stopped the grace of God, and hindered his devorion, and made him thus forget himself. *David* had first nature, then grace ; first here was darknesse, then light ; first an evening, then a day. He was in the bed of security and content, till *Nathan*, the light of grace, came & told him, Thou art the man. *David* at that time more sensible

sible of sin than grace. *Dauid's* greatest pleasure (as he thought) we see proves his greatest bane and sorrow : *David* all that while had a smiling face, yet had a gnawing worme within him, his conscience, that did never cease till it was rooted out ; his sleep was no true rest, but it was like a drunken mans sleep, which is no true repose, but full of horreur and trouble : Never had he any true sleep. For his little time of pleasure, there followed a world of sorrow, which made him thus to seek to God by Prayer and tears, saying, *Against thee onely have I sinned, and done this evill.*

Object.

If any do object, It seemeth that wrongs done to men, are no sins, and not to be repented of.

Ans.

I answer, That followeth not : For whether the wrong be done directly against God himself, as the commandments of the first Table concern God : Or indirectly against God, and directly against our brother, as all the sins of the second Table concerne our brethren. Yet inasmuch as the Law of God is broken, either in the first

first or second Table. Therefore the chiefeſt fault and wrong is againſt God himſelf : yet we are not to think that offences done againſt men are no finnes, but that wee are to be humbled for them, becauſe in ſinning againſt our brother, we ſin againſt God, whoſe law we break : And therefore we muſt reſtore four-fold, we muſt be reconciled to our Brother, and ſeek to right wrongs done unto him ; Thus much of the perſon to whom *David* confeſſeth : Not to any Miſſ-prieſt, but to God alone, who alone was offended, and who alone can pardon his great fault.

Now in the ſecond place, we are to come unto the thing confeſſed, namely, his particular ſins and impieties : *And done this evill in thy ſight.* In the former words, *I have ſinned*, he ſpake more generally : in theſe words he points out his particular and ſpeciall ſin, *And done this evill*, adultery, and murder, *in thy ſight.*

Mark what is that which moſt wounds *David's* Conſcience, & troubles his mind ; not ſo much the fear
of

of shame and reproch in the world, nor yet the fear of punishment; but his sinne, his vile sinne, it is it that wounds him, that galls him, and doth kill his heart, and grieves his poor soul: *Against thee, against thee have I sinned*: as if he should have said, O my God, it grieves me exceedingly, and wounds my heart, that ever I should be so vile, to sin against thee my gracious and mercifull God: I care not for the shame of the world, or fear of punishment; but my sin, my sinne is that which doth wound me, and gripeth me at the heart, and hath made that partition wall between me and thy saving grace. *David* when he had committed this sin of Adultery and Murder, and was so long tyed with the fetters of the flesh for the space of ten months, that he saw not his sin, yet God of his mercy and love presently dispatches and sends grace into his heart, and opens the eyes of his reason, and causes him to have compunction and sorrow o heart, in these words, saying, *I have sinned; against thee only have I sinned.*

So

So that our lesson is this, That the child of God that truly repents, nothing more grieveth him than sin, because it is sin, and breaks the Law of God; he is more grieved for sin, than either for shame or punishment.

VVell seeing this is true repentance, to be grieved for sin, and that more than for all other things; not for fear of shame or the punishment so much, as because it offends a mercifull God and loving Father. Let us try our repentance; Art thou grieved more for sin than any thing else, because it offendeth God, and displeaseth him? & couldst thou mourn for sin, if there were no shame nor punishment, Hell nor judgement? It is a certain signe of true repentance; but alas, those that can weep for fear of shame and punishment for sin, many times are nothing at all grieved for sin, in regard of God, whose most holy and perfect Law is broken; and therefore their repentance is not sound. VVe must labour for true remorse and sorrow, and not forget our sins; we must call to mind every night what we

Use 5.

Doct. 5.
Acknow-
ledge-
ment of
particu-
lar sins
required.

we have done in the day, what we have committed, and what we have omitted this is the way to repent.

Mark how *David* doth not onely in generall acknowledge his sin, but he points out his particular evill, and speciall sin of close adultery and murder, *I have done this evill*, (this grievous sin) *in thy sight*. *David* found the depth of Gods mercies by his confessing of his sinnes; for he waded through the sea of Gods judgments, as a Lamb through a shallow brooke of water. Howsoever (saith he) I laboured to smother and hide it, yet thou wast an eye-witness, and very privy unto it. So then hence we may learn, That in true repentance, there must be an acknowledgment and confession of our particular sinnes and offences, that we may say, *I have sinned and done this evill in thy sight*; Lying stealing, drunkenness, whoredome, murder, &c. VVe must come to particular and special sins; *David* he acknowledgeth his particular sinnes, of numbring the people, and of mitching with the uncircumcised Nations.

2 Chr. 31
Ezr. 9.

David

David seeing he had no way to satisfie this trespass, nor cure his wounded Conscience, immediately makes his addresse to the Lord ; saying, O Lord, give me now Celestiall comfort, such as the world cannot afford me, which I so doted on, for I know now mine own weaknesse and infirmity, which thou hast revealed unto me in me-ty; and now I am more sensible of my own miserable estate, than ever I was before; which I have committed in thy fight.

And thus do the people of Israell deal in their Conversion, 1 Sam. 12. 19. *Pray for thy servants to the Lord that we dye not; for we have sinned in asking us a King, besides all our other sins.* So the Apostle Paul, 1 Tim. 1. 13. declareth there, that many things troubled him : yet this especially, that he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and oppressor, not worthy to be called an Apostle. This appeareth likewise by the example of the *Jewes*, Act. 2. As also in the conuersion of *Zachens*, Luk. 19. who having been a griper and an oppressor, offered to make

make full restitution : So that we see it is a certain note of true repentance, to be touched with the feeling of a mans particular sins committed against God.

Seeing *David* and all the servants of God when they have been truly humbled, have repented and confessed their particular sins unto the Lord ; this shews most men and women have not true repentance, but onely the shadow of it. Alas, the vilest Atheist in the world, a Reprobate, and one that shall never be saved, may confesse this in a general and confused way, we are all sinners ; but if we will truly repent indeed, we must look to confesse our particular sins, to find them out one by one, and to acknowledge them unto the Lord with grief and sorrow, & hatred of them; but alas most men and women can content themselves in generall termes, to confesse they be all offenders, although they know in particular wherein they have offended : yea, if they be examined in particular, they doe think they keep all the Com-
man-

mandements of God : Some thinke every sigh and sorrow, or a tear shed, is repentance, but so should worldlings repent : some think every little pang and crosse in the world for sin is repentance ; then should *Pharaoh* repent ; some think that a little weeping and lamenting for sin is repentance, then should *Cain, Esau, Judas*, repent ; some think that a dayes humbling of themselves, or a dayes fasting is repentance, but so should *Ahab* repent ; some think that good works, and a little Almes-deeds, upon their Dearth's beds, is Repentance, so should every sick man repent at his leisure : Some think that to cry God mercy, the Lord have mercy upon them is repentance, so should every fool repent. See therefore how many are deceived in their repentance ; *David's* Repentance was different from these, for he changed his mind, saying in the 119. *Psa. v. 50. I have considered my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*

But we must uncase our selves, and uncover our particular finnes, if wee would

would have God to cover them with the Robe of Christs Righteousnesse : The eye cannot see it self, it is true : if we keep and hide our sins within us, wee shall never see the danger which will befall us : So if a sick man come to the Physitian, and onely tell him he is sick, and never shew him his particular grief, and disease that troubleth him, & the manner thereof, with all the Circumstances belonging to the same, he can never looke to be cured : So if we come to God the Physitian of our soules, and say only, *We have sinned*, we cannot assure our selves of pardon ; our unknown sins wee must therefore confesse generally : But our known sins we must confesse particularly, as the Prophet *David* here doth, *And done this evill* : So in the first booke of the *Chr.* chap. 12. *I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing*, that is, Numbring of the people. So that we see it stands us greatly in hand, even with grief of heart to confesse our particular sins, and to give sentence against our own selves, and to pray as
for

for life and death for the pardon of them, otherwise our repentance is, as it were but in shew, and for fashion sake, which is never acceptable with Almighty God.

Seeing then it is necessary in true Repentance, to seek out our speciall sins, and particular evils and impieties : We see that it stands us in hand to be throughly acquainted with the Law of God : for by the knowledge of the Law comes the knowledge of sin, and that man that hath the best insight in the Law of God, hath the greatest sight of his sin, and of his misery, and is most humbled and most stirred up to seek to God for mercy ; and they which have least knowledge of the Law, know least of their sins and misery, and are most proud, and least humbled, neither can they truly repent.

Vse 2.

For as a sick man is then most dangerously sicke, when he hath no feeling of his infirmity : So a sinner is then in the greatest misery, when he thinketh himselfe to be no sinner : Such a one is far off from mourning
and

and sorrowing for sin, from turning from them, and returning to God, seeing he taketh himself to be in good case, and to stand in need of no repentance. And such were the Pharisees in the dayes of Christ, whom he reproveth, *Matth. 9. 12. The whole need not the Physician, but those that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

And done this evill in thy sight.

1. Sin may well be called an evill, because it is the cause of all evil, both in soul and body ; for all judgments, plagues, and punishments, be but the fruits that come of sin ; sickness, poverty, plague, pestilence, shame, wars, all judgments be the fruits of sin.

2. Secondly, because sin doth displease God, and offendeth his divine Majesty ; therefore it is called an evill of evils.

3. Thirdly, because this evill of sin infects heaven and earth, and brings evill to the creatures of God under heaven.

Use 1. Well, seeing sin is an evill, it displeaseth God, it brings all punishments, yea, eternal death in the world

to

to come ; and seeing it infects heaven and earth with the poison of it , how should we hate and abhor sin , quake at it , be afraid to commit that which is the cause of all evils. But alas , though sin be the cause of all evill , yet we see , men fear not sin , they shun it not : Yea , they which do fear fire and water , plague and pestilence , yet here be doing and tampering with sin , as if there were no evill nor danger in it. But if that we be wise , let us fly sin above all other evils whatsoever ; and in so doing , if we flie this evill of sin , we shall prevent many other judgments and evils , which are the fruits of sin.

[*In thy sight , or before thine eyes .*]
As if *David* should have said , Oh Lord my God , though I did commit adultery never so closely , and caused *Urias* secretly to be slain ; yet alas , I see all I did was manifest before thine eyes , and could not be hidden from thy sight.

Howsoever men and women sin never so closely and secretly , yet they sin before the face of the Lord , even in

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his

Doct. 6.
Men sin
before
God.

Ps. 139.

Hcb. 4. 13

his eyes, and under his nose, the Lord standing by and looking upon them. Neither distance of place, nor secret corner; neither darknesse of the night, nor any device and shift of man whatsoever, is able to cover our sins from God's eyes; there is no creature which is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open before his eyes, with whom we have to do. It is true indeed, it is an easie matter to blear the eyes of man, to sin so closely and secretly, that no man shall know it; in some dark night, for to steal lie, commit adultery: but although all men and Angells be ignorant, yet our most secret and evill sins are all naked unto the Almighty's eyes.

Use 2.

Oh that all men could be perswaded of this Doctrine, that we ever sin in the Lord's sight; when we lie, as *Ananias* did; or steal, with *Achan*; or commit adultery, with *David*, that the Lord doth see us, and his fiery eyes beholds us; and the Lord even then stands at our elbows, and looks upon us. *Joseph* no sooner became a Courtier, but presently learns to swear by

by the life of *Pharaoh*: how should this be, but a blessed means to bridle men, and to restrain them from many secret and hidden sins. What man durst be so bold and desperate to cut a purse, when he sees the Judge's eyes set on him, and beholderth him? And what man is so desperate, that durst steal, lie, commit adultery, if he knew, that the All-seeing and piercing Eyes of this great God did behold him, and look upon him? This doth the Lord God tell the seven Churches of *Asia*, in every Epistle, *I know thy works*. Rev. 2. Then, let the remembrance of this make us watchfull and wary, to look unto our waies, to live as ever in God's presence.

Here is matter of comfort and encouragement unto the children of God; for as the Lord sees and beholds all the evils and sins of men and women, to judge and to punish them; all is naked to his piercing and all-seeing eyes. So likewise, all our good deeds and vertues are known and seen of God; *I know thy works*, all thou doest, both good and bad, I know all. Now then,

the Lord doth take knowledge of all our works, and sees them; yet, there is nothing we do, but it is manifest in his eyes. We know, he is a bountiful God, and plenteously rewards all that love and fear him: Yea, he will not leave a cup of cold water without a reward. O then, let us proceed and abound in good work, in knowledge, faith, repentance, patience, obedience, humility, zeal, love, &c. For the Lord knows and sees all, and will not let any one good work go unrewarded.

Now followes the second part of the verse, containing a reason why the Prophet *David* did thus acknowledge and confesse his sins, & humbled himself for them: namely, that by this means he might clear the Lord of all injustice and hard dealing, in word or deed. As if he should have said, O Lord, I confesse, that seeing I have so grievously sinned against thee, there is no cause why I should so much as accuse thee of the least cruelty, injustice, or hard dealing with me, either in the terrible threat-
nings

nings by thy Prophet *Nathan*, or thy righteous judgment, in taking away the child conceived in adultery. For I acknowledge, that I have deserved far more grievous plagues and punishments, for this my vile and grievous sin. And therefore by this my confession, I do clear thee, O Lord, of all injustice and cruell dealing, and condemn my self to be worthy of far more grievous judgments and punishments for my sins, as all the world may see and know, that thou art most just in all thy threatnings denounced against sin, and most pure and righteous in all thy judgments, and fatherly chastisements.

That thou maist be just.

That is, that thou maist be known just in thy works, and all the world may see and know, that there is great and just cause of thy threatening against sin and sinners. Now what these speeches were, & the judgments threatned against *David*, look in the 2^d book of *Samuel*, ch. 13. v. 10. First, that the sword should never depart from his house, but one son should

kill another. Secondly, that the child conceived in adultery should die. Thirdly, that his own son should rebell against him. And lastly, that his wives should be abused, as he had abused another man's.

Doct. 7.
The
Lord
maketh
good use
of our
conscience.

Hence mark, what use the Lord will make, even of an accusing and guilty conscience; namely, it shall not onely be the Accuser, Wirnesse, and Judge, to accuse and condemn it self, but shall clear the Lord of all injustice, and hard dealing, making way unto the Lord's righteous judgments. This we may clearly behold in *Judas, Maub. 27.* who readeth his own sentence of condemnation against himself, saying, *I have sinned, in betraying the innocent blood.* And for this purpose, the Lord hath put into the soul of every man, not onely a knowledge, whereby we can discern betwixt that which is lawfull and good, from that which is evill, so far as shall leave all men without excuse: But also, that conscience can make application of that knowledge, in all the actions of a man's life,

life, approving that which is good, and therein conceiveth matter of joy and comfort. Or else condemning him for that which is evill, which will cause a fearfull horreur in soul, as we see in *Cain*, *Gen. 4.* trembling in body, as in *Felix*, *Act. 24. 26.* or else fearfull dreams and visions, as in *Baltazar*, *Dan. 5.* And this we may clearly behold in *David*, the force of whose conscience was such, as that it sought no starting holes to hide it self, but saith, *Against thee, against thee onely have I sinned, &c.* And withall doth cleare the Lord of all injustice, and hard dealing towards him, if he should bring upon him and his house, all those fearfull judgments, which by *Nathan* the Lord's Prophet, he had threatned against him, *2 Sam. 12.* Indeed, sin and sorrow are two twins, like *Jacob* and *Esau*, one followes on the neck of another. And therefore let *Nathan's* information of God's judgments against *David*, work our reformation; for by our confession (as *David* did) we pacifie God's wrath, and divert his judgments from us.

Use 1.

From this we learn, what an intolerable torment a wicked conscience is, even a Gibbet & a Rack, to wound a man withall, and as a fearfull hue and cry every where overtaking him, giving a man no rest either night or day, but every where, and in all places, is ever dragging him before the Judge. No sooner did *Paul* dispute of Justice, Temperance, and Judgment to come, but *Felix* trembled, *Act. 24.* No sooner had *Cain* slain his righteous brother *Abel*, but his guilty conscience made his countenance to fall, *Gen. 4.* What marvail is it then, if the wicked should stifle and hinder the checks of their consciences, being so fearfull and terrible? But this they cannot do. Which being so, Oh! in the fear of God, let every one take heed of sin, for the motions thereof may well be compared to those Locusts of the bottomless pit, *Rev. 9.* having faces like men, and their hair like the hair of a woman; but a tail like a scorpion, which stingeth to death. Oh! full little doth many a poor soul think, that that sin which now seemeth

erh to be as light as a feather, should lie so heavy upon his soul in the end.

This teacheth moreover, to be very carefull, that we neglect not the checks of conscience, nor our own hearts reprovng us of our wayes, for time commeth apace, and thou knowest not how soon that conscience of thine, which now doth check thee, shall then judge thee; and that heart of thine, which now doth reprove thee, shall torment thee: And thou by it shall be accused and convicted, that thou hast been a wilfull chooser of thine own destruction.

Again, In that the Prophet doth acknowledge, that if the Lord should bring upon him all those just judgments, which he before had threatned by the Prophet *Nathan*, namely

1 Sam. 12. That the sword should never depart from his house, that the child conceived in adultery should die, that his son should deflower his wives, &c

Yet for all that, that God were most just in his judgments, we learn a second point of Doctrin, that howsoever the Lord reproveth us for sin, & seems

Use 2.

Doct. 2.
God is ever just in his judgments.

to threaten and thunder out judgments, as he did against *Pharaoh*, yet we are to confesse, that God is just, & righteous in his threatnings. That he deals not more severely with us, than our sins do deserve. This *David* did, though he was a King; yet having sinned, and committed evill in God's sight, when *Nathan* came, and took him up roundly for his sins, he acknowledged, God dealt justly with him, though he rebuked him sharply and soundly. So must we know it is our duty, that when we are reprov'd for our sins, we judge and imagine, it is no more than we have deserved. Old *Eli*, when *Samuel* told him, that God would destroy his sons, and take the High Priest's Office from him, because he did not rule and govern his children, & correct them: He answered, *It is the good Lord, let him do as it seemeth good in his eyes*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *David* did swim in a *Jordan* of sweet waters a great while, as he thought, but at length he came to the troubled waters of *Marah*, even sorrow & tears, for his sins past; and by his true
con-

contrition, and hearty sorrow of unfeigned tears, he quenched God's wrath, which was denounced against him; and for one ounce of pleasure which he had, and enjoyed, he had a pound of sorrow; for he wept, and watered his couch with his tears.

In like sort, *Mat. 15.* the *Canaanish* woman, though she were called a Dog by our Saviour; yet she justified him in his saying, *Truth, Lord, I am as thou hast said; but yet, admit I be a Dog, then give me that which Dogs oftentimes have, even a crum of thy mercy.* Thus did *Hezekiah, 2 King. 29.* when the Prophet had threatened him because of his pride, in shewing his treasures, he confesseth that *God was just, and might have dealt yet more rigorously with him, saying, The word of the Lord is good.* These examples do shew, what is the nature of true penitents, namely, to acknowledge that, which from God's Word is most severely and sharply spoken, to be just and true. Whereas on the contrary, we shall see hypocrites ready to censure God, to deal

so severely with them, as we may read, *Luk. 13.* how that the wicked at the last, will seem to plead their case with God, saying, *Lord, hast thou not preached in our streets, and have we not eat and drunk in thy company?* seeming thereby to have such an interest in Christ, as that he should deal unjustly with them, to condemn them. The like we may see in *Cain, Gen. 4.* *My sin, saith he; that is, my punishment, is greater then I can bear.* So that we see, that as righteous men acknowledge God to be just in all things, so wicked men dare charge God to his face, that he is unjust, if he punish sin severely.

Use 1.

This sheweth, of what spirit those men be of, who when they be sharply reprov'd for their sins, as swearing, drunkenness, whoredom, covetousness, &c. they begin to murmur and grudge, to find fault with the Ministers of God, that they be too hot, and too earnest, too sharp and severe; they would be more mildly dealt withall: they cannot abide these hot fellows, that be all of the spirit; they would.

would be handled nicely and gently. But we see *David*, a King, acknowledgeth God to be just, and to deal justly with him. But these men are like unto *Ahab*, they hate *Michajah*, and why? because he never prophesied good unto him, but ever told him of God's judgments; and therefore he could not away with him. But let us know, that it is a bad property, and a signe of a most lewd and gracelesse heart; *Thou hatest to be reformed*. The vilest Atheist in the world will be content to hear the Gospell: but let us know, that we must be content to hear of God's judgments. *Herod* could be content to hear *John Baptist* gladly, untill he came for to touch his hainous sin, which was a signe he had a mighty heart. But *David* could wish the righteous might smite him friendly, and reprove him; for such smiting should be good for him.

Let us learn by *David's* example quietly and patiently to hear of our sins, and to hear God's judgments denounced against them. And let us deem it a singular favour of God, if

Ps. 50. 5.

Isa. 58. 1

Mar. 6. 30

Ps. 141

Use 2.

Faithfull Ministers
a token
of God's
love.

the

Ps. 142.

the Lord send some godly *Nathan* to tell us of our sins, and to thunder out God's judgments against them; it is a signe the Lord loveth us, and would not have us to perish. And therefore let us be so far from murmuring or disliking the Lord's Ministers, for telling us of our sins, that we should rather love them and like them. Yea, *David* loved *Nathan* above all other men, because that he was a means to reclaim him, and bring him home again by true repentance. And so it is with all God's children, that those faithfull Ministers of the Word, which have been the means to humble them, and cast them down from their sins; of all other they love them, and make much of them. *David* did not put off his repentance, or delay it, saying, I will hear of it some other time, as King *Agrippa* did; no, he knew by God's grace, that the present occasion was the fittest opportunity for a sinner to repent, not to put it off till the morrow; for we have no time which we can call our own, but this minute, this present time; for who knoweth

knoweth, whether he shall see the next Sun-rising, yea or no?

Seeing when *Nathan* reprov'd *David*, he acknowledgeth it to be the Lord's rebuking of him: it must admonish all men to listen unto the word of God, in the mouthes of his Ministers, as though the Lord himself should speak unto them; for they stand in his stead, and whatsoever they speak in the name of the Lord, it is as much as if the Lord himself should speak from Heaven. And therefore Christ saith, *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* And therefore let us take to heart the judgments God threatneth by his Ministers, let us make a good use of them; and let us assure our selves, that unlesse we do repent, they will seize upon us. And therefore let all ungodly men take heed, how they revile God's faithfull Ministers, when they deal soundly and roundly, sincerely and sharply with them for sin: Thou strivest not with man, but with God.

Vse 3.
God
speaketh
by his
Ministers

Luk. 16.

And

And pure when thou judgest.

THat is, That thou maist be known to be pure, and free from all cruelty and injustice in thy judgments, when thou dost chasten man for sin. We must needs acknowledge, that thou art just, and dost never deal so hardly with us as we deserve.

For himself he confesseth, that *God* is most just. That howsoever the Lord might bring upon him all those heavy judgments, which he had threatned by his holy Prophet against him, *viz.* That evill should be raised against him out of his own house. That the sword should be sent against it. That his wives should be openly defiled. That the child born in adultery should die. Yet, though all those things should come upon him, and his house, the Lord should still be free from cruelty and injustice.

Use 1.

By this example of *David*, we may learn, to free the Lord from all cruell hard, and unjust dealing: That although the Lord bring upon us many and grievous judgments, sickness, poverty, imprisonment, plague, famine,

mine, sword, pestilence, &c yet let us take it so to heart, that ever we do acknowledge God is free from all cruell and unjust dealing. A most lively example of this we have in the people of the *Jews*, whom the Lord had grievously afflicted for the contempt of his Word, and despising the Prophet, sent them into a great captivity: Now being there, they do not complain of any unjust dealing of God towards them; but confesse rather, *That it was his endlesse mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassion fails not.* The like example we have in *Job*, who never charged God of any unjust dealing. And to the same purpose speaks the Church, *M'c. 7. 9. I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.*

Hence we are taught, whatsoever crosse or judgment the Lord shall lay upon us, to undergo the same, without murmuring or repining against God; for in all these things, God is most righteous, and layeth nothing on us, which we have not deserved. Let us therefore learn with *David*, to be

Dan. 9. 5,
6, 7.

Lam. 3.
22.

Job 1. 22.

1st 1.

be dumb and silent under the hand of God, whatsoever we suffer, because God hath done it, and we have deserved it. But alas, how far is this from those men, who, when they are crossed, are ready to break into cursing and swearing, &c. or at least fret, and repine against God, as if he had done them wrong in punishing them.

Vse 2.

This condemns that great impatience of many a one, that when the Lord doth exercise them by sickness, by poverty, by crosses in wife or children, &c. are ready to murmur and complain, that the Lord dealeth hardly with them, so that they dare reason and dispute with God. This was *Job's* case in his extremity, he forgot himself, and spake foolishly. Nay, rather let us, with *David*, confesse and acknowledge, that it is the just hand of God, and that he doth us no wrong, although he send many and long afflictions upon us: let us confesse, it is his mercy that he sends no more; yet, let us acknowledge, that we are worthy ten thousand times to perish, for our sins, and to be damned eternally.

And

Job 13.

15.

Dan. 9.

And if the Lord should for evermore condemn us, yet he should be just.

This condemns all those proud spirits, who dare charge the Lord of great cruelty and hardnesse, if he should reject the greatest part of Mankind, and damn them for their sins; they think it stands not with God's mercy so to do. But, as the Apostle *Paul*, in the 11th chapter to the *Romans*, saith, *What art thou, O man, that darest dispute with God?* Yea, it is therefore just, because God willeth it; for his Will is the rule of Justice: And therefore any thing is just because he wills it. And therefore let us not onely in our own particular crosses and calamities, acknowledge God to be just; but also in the matter of Reprobation and Rejection, let us acknowledge Almighty God to be most just and righteous; let God be true, and every man a liar.

Seeing the Lord is pure and just, free from all cruell and hard dealing; in word or deed; let us labour to be like unto him, let us be just in our word, and just in our deed; shun all unjust, cruell, and merciles dealing to our brethren:

Vse 3.

Note.

Vse 4.

with the Lord had endowed him, because God had poured into his heart, and made known unto him his Will, by his Word, more than to many others; and made him capable of the heavenly and saving knowledge of his Will.

Behold.

THis word doth not alwaies note some strange thing, but likewise sometimes pointeth out some speciall thing, worthy to be marked, and that ought to be learned of all men. For I have observed it to be repeated in the sacred Scriptures, at the least two hundred severall times, from the Alpha of *Genesis*, to the Omega of the *Revelations*. *Behold*, it is a word of comfort, and imports much good to the hearers; it is like a Beacon set upon a Hill, that gives warning, when it is kindled, to all that behold it, to look about them. It is a word of consolation, for the Angells said, *Behold, fear not, for I bring you glad tydings of peace. Behold, this is a day of great joy to all people.*

The meaning of the word

I was born in iniquity.

AS if he should have said: O Lord, I confesse, that I was not onely defiled with sin, when I committed that foul sin of Adultery, but even so soon as ever I came into the world, and saw the light of the Sun, I was polluted with sin from the top to the toe.

And in sin hath my mother conceived me.

THat is, Nor onely when I first came into the world, but even so soon as I was inclosed, and conceived in my mother's womb, even then I was stained both in soul and body with sin. So that the Prophet *David* speaketh here of that Originall sin, wherein he was both bred and born, and wherein he was defiled both in soul and body. And this Originall sin, it was the root and spawn of his other sins.

Behold.

The necessity of
this Doctrine of
Original sin.

THis word sheweth, that this Doctrine of Originall sin is a point necessary to be known and learned of all men, and such a point as none

none should be ignorant of ; because a man can never throughly know his own misery , till he come to know even his Originall sin, wherein he was both bred and born ; to know, that by nature, even so soon as we are born , yea, conceived in the wombo, we be but a lump and masse of sin, and by nature the children of wrath , by the disobedience of our first parents , *Adam and Eve.*

Eph. 2. 2.

And this is true of all, (without exception) high and low, rich and poor, noble and simple ; for thus doth *David* confesse himself, *I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.* If in sin, then in Gods wrath, and in danger of eternall condemnation. If any ask, How can this be ? I answer, Every man is guilty of *Adam's* great sin, and also tainted Originally with all corruption, with a pronnesse unto all iniquity. Therefore it followeth in equity and justice, that every man is born under the wrath and curse of God.

And yet consider, how few observe this point of Doctrine, concerning
Originall

Gen. 8. 22
Job 14. 4
Joh. 3. 6.

Origin ll sin , not one of a hundred. Oh then, let us labour to see in what a blessed estate we were at first created ; and withall , how we be defiled stained with the fall of *Adam* , and now by nature are but a very lump of sin and pollution ; so that we may labour to recover that former estate again, by Water and the Spirit, which is the Regeneration.

Dott. 1
What
need we
have to
look into
our na-
ture.

Ephes. 2.
Joh. 3. 6.

Seeing *David* thus repenting of his actuall sin of adultery and murder, doth come to finde out the roo and ground of it, his Originall sin , and corruption of nature ; we learn , That a man doth never truly repent of any one crime , unlesse withall he come to finde out other sins, whereof he is guilty ; yea, till he can descend to the very fountain and mother sin ; namely, corruption of nature , and originall sin ; that is, that pollution of soul and body , wherein we are bred and born. For here *David* doth not speak of some one or two sins , but now he confesseth, that he is even a masse of corruption, & a lump of all uncleannesse, and from top

to toe is defiled with sin. Even so now man doth truly repent, till he can acknowledge that he is born in sinne : yea, as it were a lump and mass of all uncleannesse; and every particular sinne wee fall into, should put us in mind of this natural pollution; that we are nothing else but a very lump of sinne, and that by nature there is in us nothing that good is, but sin and corruption.

And as it was in *David*, when he repented of his Adultery, he comes to other sins, even to the root and spawn of all : So it is in every true repentant sinner, he that is wounded for one sin, and repents of that truly, he repents of all, he is humbled for all his sinnes, and in the end comes with *David*, to see that he is but a lump of sin, and mass of all pollution : and indeed a true conversion of a sinner must begin in the heart, as it did with *David* : It was not forced from *David* to confesse his sin, for a forced confession is not so good, to leave sin when we cannot commit it longer : no, *David* said, *Behold I was born in sin.*

Then *David* doth confesse here,

L

that

Doct. 5.
By Nature no
man is
born the
Child of
God.

Ep. 1. 23.
Gen. 8.
21.
Ioh. 3. 6.
Ioh. 10.
Gen. 5. 3.

that he was even conceived in sinne ; that is, so soon as ever he was inclosed in his mothers womb, he was polluted with sin and naturall corruption. We see, that no man by nature is born the child of God, but by nature we are all the Children of wrath; yea, we are by nature a lump of sinne, a masse of all uncleanness and corruption : Our minds are full of blindness, our wills of disobedience, and our affections full of naughtinesse and untowardness ; yet, by original sin, we are guilty of the wrath of God, & in danger of hel and damnation, worthy to perish for ever.

Yea, by nature there is no difference between the Elect and the Reprobate, neither in outward or in inward disposition, untill God make it by grace. *Paul*, as bloudy a persecutor as ever was *Domitian* or *Julian* ; *Zachens*, as unconscionable and covetous a Worldling, as was that rich glutton, damned in Hell, *Luke. 16.* and *Luke. 19.* All men are alike by nature, before that grace makes a difference.

Life. 1

Seeing all men by nature are the children

children of wrath, and heirs of Gods vengeance, in danger to be damned, and worthy to perish eternally in Hell fire for ever: Then he that dyeth in the state of nature, cannot be saved, and come to life eternal; but living and dying a natural man, must needs be damned and dye eternally. *Except a*

man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Again, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.* And there-
 Ioh. 3.
 Luke. 13.
 5.

fore so long as we continue in the state of nature, being conceived and born in sin, we are in a most miserable and desperate estate.

For the poyson of our nature is the same in us, that is in the wicked, and by nature wee are prone to all manner of sin: And howsoever, by the special mercy of God, we have escaped many horrible and grievous finnes, which we find that the wicked oft have fallen into: it is not, for that we are of a purer nature then they; (for it is alike with the Reprobate) but because the poysoned corruption thereof hath not yet discovered it self in us, which we have just cause every day to feare.

O then let us labour to get out of this cursed state of nature, and get in to the state of grace, to be born anew, to become new Creatures in Christ Jesus, to repent, to seek to Jesus Christ for mercy : for if we live and dye in the state of nature, it is impossible we should be saved : And therefore the estate of all carnal men and women which are naturally naturall, howsoever civill, & honest, are in a fearful estate and condition for all this while they doe nothing but sinne: All the actions of a naturall man be so many sins unto him ; as Prayer, hearing the Word, receiving the Sacraments, and the like ; for before any of these sacrifices can be accepted of God, their persons must first be approved.

Gen. 4.

Use 2.

Seeing that all of us be conceived in sin, and stained with Original uncleanness, and therefore are not onely subject to the curse of God, but even polluted in soul and body, blind in our minds, rebellious in our wills and affections : then those men who stand upon their own wit and wisdom and

and care not for the Word of God preached, shew that they be in a miserable case : All the knowledge, wit and strength of nature, cannot bring a man to heauen, and to life eternal : And the reason is, *The naturall man perceiveth not the things that are of God.* Aguin, *when as the world could not know God in the wisdom of God,* it pleased God by the foolishnesse of Preaching, to save them that beleevē : And therefore, let us renounce our selves, our natural wisdom, strength and goodnesse, & become fooles in our selves, that we may be wise in God ; abhor our selves, and our own goodnesse, and labour to be found righteous in Christs Righteousnesse. *Paul* confesseth, *That in me there dwelleth no good thing,* we cannot think a good thought, much lesse do any good, till we be illuminated by the vvord and Spirit, enlightened and sanctified.

Then wee may perceive that the Doctrine of the Papists, that man hath naturall free will, and by vertue of that can do some good to please God, and can keep the Law, &

L 2

merit

1 Cor. 1.

10.

1 Cor. 3.

21.

Rom. 8.8

Gen. 8.11

Rom. 7.7.

Vse. 3.

merit life eternall, that is most false : for all men be conceived in iniquity, stark dead in transgressions, have no power to do good things, but are prone to all evil and corruption. For a man hath no free will in any thing that is good, and leadeth to life eternal, but all to evil.

And in sin hath my mother conceived me.

Herein we may note the greatness of *Adams* fall, and the sin of our first Parents, who did not onely bring the curse of God upon themselves, but upon all their posterity ; and did not onely defile themselves, but all that should come of them. For *Adam* did not fall as a private man, but as the main root and stock of all mankind ; and we all fell in him, because wee were all in his loynes. And therefore seeing such is the greatness of *Adams* fall, we ought to be humbled for it, and dayly to bewail it ; because if he had not transgressed, then we should not have been conceived in sin, nor lost the image of God, wherein we were at first created in holynesse and righteousness :
and

and withall we must labour to be renewed dayly, and to have the image of Almighty God restored, by dying to sin, and living to righteousness; that we may be holy as God is holy, and righteous as God is righteous. God is unchangeable, and yet our sin can change him; yea, from being our friend, to be our enemy. Man, by the power of sin, can turn good into evil and light into darknesse; and man falling into sinne, doth cast himselfe into the pit of destruction. Let us take notice, that punishments are proportioned and provided for them, according to the measure of grace which was given them by God at first.

We see, that our natural Parents, though they be holy, and such as believe; yet they beget children in sinne and uncleanness, and do convey Original sin unto their children; they do warme them with unclean bloud, and so by that means do make them children of wrath, and heirs of Gods anger, and in state of damnation. For believing Parents beget not believing children, but children like

Doct. 7.
Godly
parents
beget
sinfull
children.

Gen. 5. 3. unto themselves, as they be sinfull men and women : *Adam begat a child in his own likeness* : That is, a sinfull man like unto himself.

Now, we know that Gods Image was defaced in *Adam*, he begat a son, therefore corrupt, according to his own corrupt image, as *Job* speaketh, *Job. 14. 4. Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* And this is the reason, *Gen. 4. 3.* That the corrupt nature of *Cain* led him to that for the which he had no example. And this is true of all men else, though they might never see any thing that were evill, yet of themselves and of their own dispositions they would do evill, being by nature, men haled thereunto.

Use. 3.
Parents
Duty.

Well, seeing Parents now by the fall of *Adam*, get sinfull children, and they be bred and born in sin, and they be meanes to beger them, and to bring them into the world, and to conveigh Original sinne unto them, and make them in a fearfull and damnable estate : O how should Parents labour to bring them out of the

the state of nature and damnation, into grace and salvation? If thou shouldest doe any thing to bring thy Child into danger of death, how would it grieve thee, that thou by thy folly shouldest bring thy childe to untimely death! How much more to bring them in danger of eternall death? And herefore pittie thy poor child, seek to make him the child of God: repent thy self, pray for him, admonish him, bring him to heare the word, and publike meanes, call upon him to repent, to begge the pardon of his sin, to fear God; give him good example, lest for want of this thou dost thrust his poor soul into Hell: Oh how can Parents be too carefull for their children, seeing they have been the meanes to bring them into this wofull estate!

Seeing that *David* doth acknowledge his naturall sin and corruption. to this end, even to aggravate the grievousnesse of his sin, & not to lesse it, or excuse himselfe, but rather to confesse, that he was nothing else but a masse of sin, and all pollution:

Note.

See. 2.

this shews of what spirit those prophane beasts be, who being told of their filthy sins, of adultery, whoredome, and uncleannesse, by and by they answer? VVhy, what should we do? we are but flesh and bloud, and we see it is in our nature to sin, and so think by one sin to excuse another, and by one debt to pay another. Tell men of their unbridled and unruly affection, covetousnesse, anger, &c. and what is their answer? It is their nature to do so, which is all one, as to go about to pay one debt with another: And thus they go about to hide their sins, we see *David* sought no such starting holes, but rather confesseth he is a masse of sin, and that he is every way worthy to perish for his sin, and in danger to be damned: And therefore let us take heed that wee doe not so confesse our naturall corruption, as to make it a boulder to uphold us in our sins; but rather to be humbled for it, that our nature is so miserably polluted, and labour to have it reformed.

And last of all, this may serve to reprove the extreame folly of those
 the

that stand so much upon their pedigree, as though they were not made of common mould, but even from the consideration of the greatnesse of their Parentage bear themselves a-looſe, thinking none their equall ; as though true Nobility stood in this, that man descends of man.

But let no such stand so much upon the honour and greatnesse of their birth, or the antiquity of their Predecessors, as though in these things alone they were happy. But let them labour withall, to be the Sons of *God* by regeneration ; This is indeed the Ornament of bloud, and the finest flower in their garland. And though a man be never so noble, or great in Estate, yet if he be not a repentant sinner, and such a one that is truly humbled before *God*, he is most base and vile, and his Nobility stinks in the nostrils of *God*.

Ps 4.

VERSE.



VERSE. 6.

Behold thou lovest truth in the inward affections, therefore hast thou taught me wisdom in the secret of my heart.

David in the former Verse had set out the grievousness of his sin, and by this, that he was even conceived in sin, and even from the cradle was worthy to perish, and to be damned. In this sixth Verse the Prophet *David* proceeds to set out the grievousness of his sin by another argument, taken from the most pure nature of Almighty God, who being most just and holy, and most pure, can delight in nothing but in that which is pure and holy: But he confesseth, that by his sins he had defiled himself both in soul and body, so as he was not worthy to appear in the presence of Almighty God.

Behold.

The meaning of the words.

AS if he should have said, Oh Lord my God thou art a most holy and most just God, and canst a-

hide.

bide no unclean thing. But I, even *David*, once a creature after thine own heart, sanctified by thy holy Spirit have spoyled all, and with filthy uncleanness and adultery, as also murder and shedding of guiltlesse blood, have defiled and stained my selfe both body and soul : so as I am now clear out of order, and so foul, that I am not worthy to come into thy presence, so as instead of that inward purity and sincerity, and that uprightness both in soul and body, I have brought out most ugly and cursed fruits of sin and uncleanness. Thus doth he still lay open his misery, and aggravate his sin before the Lord.

Seeing that *David* doth aggravate his sinne by weighing the most pure and holy nature of God, that can bide no impurity, or uncleanness. From hence we learn, that a man or woman shall never sufficiently enough see themselves and their own misery, till such time as they do look up unto the most holy and pure nature of God. All the while we measure our selves by our selves, look up-

Doct. 1.
True
know-
ledge of
God wor-
keth true
humility.

Job. 42.
1, 2.

on our own goodnesse, Wisedome, Knowledge, Uprightnesse, we think highly of our selves : But if we once lift up our eyes to the most holy and most pure nature of God, and withall consider how wee are swarved from it, and are defiled with sinne : O then we begin to pull down our peacocks-feathers, and to humble our selves in the sight of God. Job had a long time stood upon his own goodnesse and virtues, but after the Lord opened his eyes, to see the most pure and holy nature of God, and his own vileness, he cryed out, *O Lord, than I know, canst do all things; no thought is hid from thee : I have spoken things I know not. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth thee : Therefore I abhor my self, & repent in dust and ashes.* Paul saith of himself, *Before the Commandement came, I was alive, Rom. 7.* A jolly fellow : thought well of himselfe, but when the Commandement came, and he had got the knowledge of God, namely, that he was a holy and just God, then he was dead. The people
of

of Israel thought it an easie matter to serve the Lord, & were very forward, but *Joshua* adviseth them to take heed, for saith he, *The Lord is a holy God, a jealous God, and will not pardon your sins and iniquities.* So that by all these it appeareth, that the knowledge of God, as he is a holy, pure, and righteous God, is a special means to humble us, & to make us know our selves, and our misery; and therefore doth the Prophet *David* prefix before it this note of attention, *Behold,* mark, consider it well.

What is the reason that sinful and miserable men, dare be so bold to stand upon their own goodnesse and worthinesse, when they come into Gods presence, like the proud Pharisee? because they do not consider with whom they have to deale, with God who is most pure, and loveth purity, and can abide no impurity. Oh if men would look up into the holy and most pure nature of God, it would be a special meanes to humble them, and to pluck down their pride: Then they would see and acknowledge that

1oh. 13.
10.

Yse 1.

Luke, 18.
24.

Gen. 17.

that they are but dust and ashes, as *Abraham*, pleading with God, confesseth, and humbles himself: Then they would come with more reverence and fear, and confesse themselves vile and miserable creatures. O then let us think upon this with *David*, *Job*, *Abraham*, when wee come into Gods presence to humble us, that we may come with great preparation, and look unto our feet and affections, that we may remember we come not into the presence of an earthly King, but of the ever-living God, as that we thereby be brought not to conceive too well of our selves, as many men do in these dayes.

Thou lovest truth in the inward affection.

Jo. 1.45.

Hence mark, that a sound, upright, and sincere heart, is that the Lord loveth well, and taketh delight in, and without this, all that we do is loathsome, and abominable. This honest and good heart our Saviour Christ commenderh in *Nathaniel*: *behold a true Israelite, in whom is no guile*: This true *Israelite*, this upright heart,

heart, the Lord loveth it, and the Lord delighteth in it: *And the good ground are those which with an honest and good heart, hear the Word, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

Luk. 8.
15.

This serveth to cut the comb of all hypocrites and dissemblers, who think God will be pleased with outward shewes and colours, although they be rotten at the Core like apples of Sodom: The Lord sheweth his dislike of these naughty and dissembling wretches: *This people come near me with their lips, and honour me with their mouths, but their hearts are far from me.* So the Lord telleth the Jews. *You did but dissemble with him in your hearts, when you sent me unto the Lord to pray for you, and that you would do his Will & his Word, but now you will do nothing but clean contrary, even after your own lusts.* And amongst us in these dayes, there are many hypocrites and dissemblers, painted tombs, gay without, making faire shewes, and goodly colours, but their hearts are rotten to the Core; they are but counterfeite Christians, and God abhorreth

Use. I.

Ier. 52.
20.

Ac. 5.

horreth them, and hath no liking of them : For as he loved truth and soundness of heart, so he hateth and abhorreth all hypocrisie. Let all such look upon the fearfull hand of the Lord on *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who because they would seeme to be religious, and somewhat forward to sell their Lands, and give to the poor: because their hearts were not sound and upright, but they dissembled ; therefore the Lord smote them both dead. And to shew how the Lord hateh all hypocrites and dissemblers, Christ, in the 24 of *Matthew*, and v. 51. saith ; *All vile sinners shall have their portion with hypocrites*, because of all men, hypocrites shall have greatest measure of torment and condemnation.

Use 2.

Seeing that the Lord loveth and delighteth in truth and sincerity of the mind and affection, let us be carefull all our dayes to get a sound and upright heart, void of all hypocrisie and dissimulation, so as in all things we find our hearts sound and sincere, in all our duties in the worship of God.

God, in speaking, hearing, praying ; yet, in all things. Now this uprightnesse and soundnesse of the heart will appear, as by many other things, so by this, when a man is carefull to please God, and to shun sin in private as in publick, in secret as abroad ; and makeing conscience of sin, although no man nor angel could accuse him of it ; then it is a signe his heart is sound and upright. But if thou find, that in secret thou darest commit those finnes, which thou wouldest be loath to commit abroad in the sight and view of others, it is a signe, thy heart is not upright with God. Oh then, let us labour to get this honest and good heart, this soundnesse and sincerity of our affections ; that is *truth in the inward affections*, which will bring peace unto our soules, and make all we do acceptable, when our heart is purified by faith. When the Lord describes a blessed man, he shews who it is, *Even in whose spirit there is no guile*. And whatsoever a man doth, though never so excellent and glorious in the eyes of man, though

A.C. 15.

9.

Psal. 3. 2.

though a man could even speak with the tongue of men and Angels, and could pray never so excellently for words or matter: yet if the heart be not found, but hollow, and full of Hypocrisie, all is not worth a button; whereas, if the heart be sincere and sound, purified by faith in Christ Jesus, though men have many wants and weaknesse, the Lord God regardeth the uprightnesse and truth of the heart.

Doff. 2.
A Sancti-
fied heart
a great
blessing
of God.

Last of all, observe hence what a singular favour and grace of God it is when wee have found and sanctified hearts, sincere and upright with God, void of hypocrisie and dissimulation. It is that the Lord so highly esteems of, that he willeth most earnestly for it; *Deut. 5. 29. Oh that there were ths hearts in them.* And the Prophet *David* saith here, that the Lord doth love truth in the inward affection: and again, *Prov. 11. 28. They that be of a froward heart, are abominable to the Lord: but they that be upright in heart are his delights.* This upright heart is in none but those that be true-

truly regenerate, which have truly repented of their faults, and believe in Christ Jesus, *Act. 15. 9.* Because faith alone doth purifie the heart; and therefore those that do not beleieve and repent, cannot have this pure heart; and it is such an heart as hath no purpose to live in any known sin whatsoever, but a desire and carefull endeavour to perform obedience to every one of the Commandements.

Well, seeing the Lord God doth so highly commend an honest heart, and so earnestly desireth & wisheth it: Oh how should we labour for it, to have a sound heart purified by faith in Christ Jesus, to carry no purpose to sinne in any thing, but in all things to please him, and to do his will: and therefore again I say, let us looke to our hearts that they be sound, and that as we professe our selves to be Christians in shew, so we may prove our selves Christians in the sight of God: That he may approve of us in that we have sound hearts to walke with our God, and a purpose in all things to do his will,

John. 1. 14. It is no small commendation that Christ gives to *Nathaniel*, that he was a true *Israelite*, in whom was no guile. And nothing indeed doth more distinguish a true Christian from a counterfeit, but this truth and sincerity of heart, *Esau*, *Gen. 27.* can mourn like *Jeremiah*; and *Ahab* can put on sackcloth; *1 Reg. 21.* and *Saul* as well as *David* can say, *I have sinned.* But their hearts were full of hypocrisy, far from sincerity before God.

Doct. 3.
Sinne is
but a ly-
ing va-
nity.

Ios. 7. 25.

2 Kin. 21

Seeing God loveth truth in the inward affection, we learne, Where truth doth not reign, sin doth reigne, which is but a lying vanity: And all those that have been in love with it, in the end have found the same to be true. *Achan*, through his covetous desire, thought to enrich himself by the wedge of gold, and the *Babylonish* garment, which he had purloyned, contrary to the Commandement of God; but it fell out to his own destruction. *Ahab* rose up, and took possession of *Naboth's* Vine-yard; but withall, he purchased the wrath of God, the destruction of himselfe, and the ruine

ruine of his whole house. The like may be said of *Judas*, who through his coverous desires was led to betray his Master; but how he digested the same in the end, the Evangelist declareth; when he saw that Christ was condemned, he brought again the 30 pieces of silver to the high Priest and Elders, saying, *I have sinned, in betraying the innocent blood.* And this shall men one day be sure to find that the perishing pleasures of sin, shall have sorrow in the end. That if they have not truth in the inward affection of the heart, there must needs reign sin; and sin is a lying vanity, and will deceive in the end.

Mat. 27.
4.

Indeed all sin to a naturall man is delightfull and pleasant, he findeth it sweet to his taste: but it is as sweet meat that hath poyson mingled with it: That howsoever it is sweet in the tast, yet in the end it bringeth death. So it is with sinne, it doth delight in the committing thereof, but in the end threatneth the destruction of the whole man.

Heb. 3.3

Here then wee may see the wofull fruit

U/2.1.

- fruit of sin ; which naturall men make their chiefeft happinesse and felicity. They may indeed delight for a time , and please the carnal desires of natural men : But oh, alas ! they bring an heavy accompt and reckoning in the end. So that we may say to all naturall and carnall men, whose portion is in this life, as *Abner* said in another case: *Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end ?* This we may see in *Cain*, *Esau*, in *Ahab*, *Judas*, &c. that having tasted of the bread of deceit, have had their months filled with gravell in the end. For the motions of sinne are like those Locusts of the bottomlesse pit ; having faces like men, and their haire like the haire of a Woman, but a rayle like a Scorpion, which stingeth to death.
- Use 2.* We learn hence that it must be the Christian practice of a godly man : Namely, to walk plainly and sincerely, to be a true *Israelite* indeed, in whom there is no guile. This is that which *Salomon* teacheth : *He that walketh uprightly, walketh boldly; but he that perverteth his wayes, shall be known.* Oh it

is a gracious thing for a man in all things, to labour to keep faith and a good conscience; such a man may assure himself, that the Lord loveth him, *For he loveth truth in the inward affections.* But such as commit wickedness, without care or conscience, shall be sure to feel the smart in the end.

Therefore hast thou taught me wisdom in the secret of my heart.

THe Prophet David in this last place aggravateth his sin, by that knowledge which God in mercy had bestowed upon him; namely, that God had taught him heavenly wisdom by the Law of God, whereby he knew very well what God required at his hands, & how he ought to serve & worship God. Nay, by his Spirit he had taught him wisdom in the secret of his heart in a speciall manner, revealing his will unto him; & therefore he confesseth, that his sin was the more hainous and grievous: for if he had never been sanctified, nor truly called; if he had been ignorant & blind in the Word of God; though it could not excuse him, yet his sin

David's
sin he
nous, and
why?

Because
God had
taught
him wi-
dom se-
cretly.

had not been so great : But seeing he, who had made so good proceeding in the service and worship of God, who had taught others, who was so enlightened by the Spirit, and been taught in a speciall manner, against knowledge, against conscience, and so fouly sinned against God ; this highly encreaseth and aggravateh his sin.

Doct. 4.
A fearful
thing to
sin a-
gainst
know-
ledge.

Hence then learn, That it is a fearful and very dangerous sin for any man or woman, to sin against the known truth of the Word and Law of God, against knowledge and conscience, when as we have not onely known the will and word of God, but believed it, been enlightened by the Spirit, and being taught of God in our inward affections ; then against all these means to sin, and to commit iniquity against knowledge and conscience, is a most dangerous thing. this may here appear in *David*, who was grievously wounded for his sin above all other, and felt the smart of it, to humble him all the daies of his life. So *Peter's* deniall of Christ, *Lu. ch. 23.* though it were for fear, yet

Lu 23.1

yet being against knowledge & conscience, Oh, it caused him to weep bitterly. And indeed, sins of knowledge, and against conscience, are done with some presumption against God. And therefore, if ever a man be touched for them, they will wound him deep, and cause tears to follow.

Seeing it is so fearfull and dangerous to sin against knowledge and conscience, because thereby we do what lieth in us to quench the spirit, to wound our consciences; and it is a great step unto the sin against the holy Ghost. Oh then, let us in the fear of God, take heed we never give that liberty to our own lusts and liking, as to sin against knowledge and conscience. If the Devill tempts thee to any sin, which thou knowest is condemned in the Word of God, as swearing, lying, stealing, murder, adultery, &c. and thy conscience telleth thee of it, and checks thee for it; do not commit it, though thou mightest gain a Kingdome by it. For that which followeth will be a farre greater losse; for thou shalt lose

peace of Conscience, and joy in the spirit, feeling of God's love and comfort in affliction; and if God be not mercifull unto thee, thou shalt go on from sin to sin, to a reprobate sense. It is true, ignorance shall excuse no man; yet sins of ignorance are far lesse than sins of knowledge, and against conscience. *Paul* persecuted the Church of God, but it was by ignorance, therefore God shewed him mercy; but if thou of spite and malice shalt persecute, and against knowledge, and the checks of thy conscience, hurt and injure the servants of God, & members of Christ; how canst thou ever look to find mercy? Thou knowest, that God forbidderh & condemneth lying, swearing, stealing, murder, adultery, drunkennesse, &c. And if thou shalt wittingly and willingly rush into them, though thou know they be forbidden, thou maist look for some fearfull judgments of God upon thee. And therefore if thou be tempted, answer, I will not yield: It is written, I may not steal, lye, commit

mit adultery, &c. as Christ answered the Devill.

Matth. 4.

We see, that if God leave his children, they may fall dangerously into greiv' errors, yea, against knowledge and conscience, as *Abraham, Paul, Peter, &c.* For of our selves we have no power to resist the subtile temptations and assaults of the Devill; but even as a stiffe stund so long as it is staide, but when it is left alone, presently it falls with the least puff of wind; so do we. And therefore let us not rely too much upon our own power, as *Peter* did, and fell; but fear our weaknesse, and suspect our selves, and pray the Lord to hold us, to our selves, for then there is no sin so foul, into which we will not easily plunge our selves.

Vse 2.

And yet if the Lord leave us to fall into some great sin, against knowledge and conscience, let us not despair; or think we have sinned against the holy Ghost, as it is the Devils usuall temptation, to perswade a Christian, that he hath sinned against knowledge and conscience, and there-

fore against the holy Ghost, and that God hath no mercy for him; and to that purpose, he abuseth one special place, *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* For it is impossible that they which were once lightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gifts, and were made partakers of the holy Ghost, & have tasted of the good word of God, & of the power of the world to come, if they fall away, should be renewed again by repentance. By this place, & such like, the subtil Devil labours to bring the children of God to despair, if they commit sin, after they be called and enlightened, because they sin against knowledge and conscience.

But that the children of God may offend, and commit some great crime, and evill, against knowledge, and conscience, after they be enlightened, and effectually called and sanctified, as appeareth in *Abraham, Sarah, Paul, Peter, &c.* and daily experience proveth it. And therefore all sins of knowledge, and against conscience, are not sins against the holy Ghost. But in that place he speaketh of such as of desperate malice, & set purpose, offend

offend against the holy Ghost, and wholly fall away, and abandon all Religion, and renounce Christ and his Gospell. And therefore the holy Ghost saith, not onely if they fall, but if they fall away, that is, ever cut themselves clean off from Christ. Again, they that sin wilfully, even desperately persecuring Christ in his members, and crucifie the Lord of glory, and make a mock of him, trample under foot the Son of God, and account the blood of the New Testament as an unholy thing, and despise the Spirit of God. Now none of all these did befall *David, Peter*, or any elect child of God; who though they sin of knowledge, against conscience, yet do they mourn, and are grieved for it; and it is for fear, or by the continuall instigation of the Devill, and strength of his temptation, or in hast, or of weaknesse; but afterwards they do grieve for it, and do desire nothing more than to repent, and to be reconciled to God; which they cannot do, that commit sin against the holy Ghost.

Doct. 5
Heavenly wisdom is the proper gift of God's Spirit.

Ioh. 6. 45

Iſa 45. 13

God teacheth his wisdom two ways

Rev. 3. 9.

1 Cor. 3. 10.

We learn, That heavenly wisdom and saving knowledge, which worketh in the heart, and converteth the soul, is the proper work and gift of God alone by his Spirit. Thou (O Lord) haſt by thy Spirit taught me wisdom in the ſecret of my heart, enlightning and giving me a heart to know thee. *All the elect ſhall be taught of God.* Again, the Lord promiſeth, *To make all be children ſchoolars of God;* and he will be their Maſter and Teacher. So that it is manifeſt, that God alone is the School-maſter, who doth teach by his Spirit true and heavenly wiſdom, ſaving and ſound knowledge in the heart.

And this teaching of God, contains two parts. Firſt, the enlightning of the mind. Secondly, the bowing of the heart.

Firſt, the Lord doth by his Spirit, which is the eye-ſalve, annoint our eyes, and clear our minds, and maketh us able to underſtand his will in his word. By nature (alas) we cannot know his will; *for the naturall man perceives not the things that be of God.*

For

For they be foolishnesse unto him; and even as the clear Sun is unto a blind man, so is the Word to us; by nature we understand nothing to our good.

Secondly, the Lord teacheth wisdom in the secret of the heart, when he bows the heart to the obedience of his will; so the Lord opened the heart of *Lydia*, to attend unto the preaching of *Paul*.

Ast. 16.
14.

Seeing it is God who teacheth wisdom and saving knowledge, we must labour to become his Souldiers and Disciples; we must be willing to learn of this Master, to come to his School, where his Word is taught, and entreat him, that he will teach us his will, and teach us wisdom in our hearts: *David, Psal. 119.* in many verses hath it, *Teach me thy word, O Lord, and I will keep it even to the end.* And as for such as scorn to have God for their School-master, to come to his School to be taught of God; all their wisdom, if it were as great as the wisdom of *Solomon* and *Achitophel*, it is but folly with God.

1st 1.

Seeing God, that is our spirituall

M 5

School-

School-master, teacheth not onely the ear or tongue, but he teacheth the heart, in the secret of the heart and affection, by moving and bowing them to obedience. This sheweth, that most men are not taught of God; for all the knowledge that they have of God and his Word, it is onely in words, lip-knowledge, and the knowledge in the tongue; to talk of God, to discourse and commend Religion; but it never cometh to the heart and conscience to humble them, or to enlighten the minde, truly to convert the soul, or to bow the will and affection to obedience. Well, know this, that all thy knowledge and wisdom cannot do thee any good, unlesse it bring forth obedience to the will of God. And therefore try and prove thy knowledge, whether it hath humbled thy heart, moved thy affection to obey the will of God, to keep his Commandments. For if thy heart give way to sin, and thou art not purged nor bettered, nor reformed in heart and life; (alas) thy knowledge is but carnall, and will
never

never save thy poor soul.

And this serves to stop the moutches of many vain hypocrites and dissemblers, who because they can talk and discourse of matters of Religion, and commend the Preacher, do think themselves jolly fellows, and good Christians. But I say, unlesse the Spirit of God reach thee wisdom in the secret of thy heart, by bowing it to obedience and reformation, all thy knowledge is but a carnall and fleshly knowledge, which may befall a Reprobate. *Paul* shews us how we may undoubtedly know, whether we be taught of God or not. *If any man love God, he is taught of God.* So that by our unfeigned love of God, which will appear in keeping his Commandments, and doing his will, we shall know, whether we be truly taught of God, and he that hath not the love of God, nor care to keep his Commandments; that man, let his knowledge be never so great, certainly he was yet never truly taught of God.

1 Cor. 8.

VERSE



VERSE VII.

*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be
clean: Wash me, and I shall be
whiter than snow.*

David
renews
his former re-
quests,
verse 2.

David having made his request unto God for mercy, for the pardon of his sins, and used a reason from the free confession and acknowledgment of them, to move the Lord to pity him; doth here again renew his suit, and humble request unto God: And he prayeth here unto God for two great benefits: First, Justification, in the free pardon of his sins, and imputation of Christ's righteousness, *ver. 7.* And secondly, for Sanctification, and Reformation of the whole man, *ver. 10.*

And first, *ver. 7.* he entreats the Lord for the free pardon of his sins, that God would cleanse and wash him from them, in the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. And secondly, he prayeth for the blessed fruit of Justification: namely, peace
have

of conscience, and joy in the Spirit, *vers.* 8. For till the conscience have a Certificate from God, and a blessed Pardon sealed, and applied by faith, it cannot be at quiet.

First, seeing *David* had praied before unto God for mercy and pardon of his sins; and here doth again renew the same petition, and in other words put up his request unto God for the same. Hence we learn, That the pardon of our sins is a singular favour and mercy of God, bestowed upon us for *Jesus Christ's* sake; which appears, in that *David* so often in this Psalm prays for it; therefore it is a great and inestimable mercy, and hardly come by. Not so easily as most men think. *David* shewed how great a blessing it is, in that he preferred it before a Kingdom; and though he was a King, yet he pronounceth him blessed, not that was a King, in the 32 Psalm, v. 1, 2. but, *whose sin is pardoned. God hath sent his Son Jesus Christ to blesse you, in turning every one of you from your evill ways; a blessing of all blessings.*

Doct. 1.
Pardon
of sin, the
greatest
mercy.

Seeing

Use 1.

Mar. 16.
16.

Seeing remission of sins is so great a blessing, and hardly come by : First, we learn, That we esteem of this above all other things in the world. If the question were asked, what we desire in the whole world? we should answer with feeling, The pardon of our sins. And therefore we should desire, and seek this blessing above all other. If thou be as poor as *Job*, and hast this, thou art rich, and a happy man.

Seeing *David* used so many prayers unto *God*, and useth such reasons to move the Lord to pittie him, and to pardon his offences. Hence we see, that those are much deceived, who think it the easiest matter in the world, to get the pardon of their sins; and if they can but say, *Lord, have mercy on me*, all is well. No, no, Lord have mercy upon me will not serve the turn: good things are hardly come by, without great travail, labour, and study. How much more is it hard to get the pardon of our sins, the salvation of our souls, and life eternall? And therefore let us ob-
serve,

serve, that to get the pardon of our sins, we must take great pains, labour, and diligence: we must shed many a tear in bewailing them; they will cost many a sob, and many a sigh, many a prayer and request unto God upon our knees: And then, if we obtain it, Oh it is a wonderfull favour and mercy of God, it will make us truly happy and blessed for evermore.

In this verse, here are two persons meant; the first is the Physitian, which is God, being entreated by the Patient, *David*, to purge him with *byssop*. Then the confession of the Patient, *I shall be whiter than snow*. Which shews a two-fold fruit and effect of his Requests. *David* here puts all the work into God's hands. He doth not say, he will help to make the medicine, but leaves it onely to God. Nor doth *David* say to God, Make thou the salve, and I will bring *byssop*; but his request and petition was, *Do thou purge me, do thou wash me; then shall I be clean and whiter than snow*. Which is the confession of the party.

Parts of
the verse.

For the first Petition, *Purge me with
byssop*

Dent. 14.
6, 7.
Num. 10.
18.

Hysop. In these words he allude h to the legall ceremonies, and minner of purging, used in the time of the old Law; in the purifying of the Leper, and of any person polluted, they were to dip the bunch of *hysop* in blood, or in water, and so sprinkle it on the person to be purified; which Ceremony was a Type and Figure of the blood of Jesus Christ, who is that alone Sacrifice and Lamb of God; which taketh away the sins of the world.

Now then, seeing that by this sprinkling with *hysop* in the blood of beasts, is meant the sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ; when he saith, *O Lord, purge me with hysop, &c.* It is all one as if he should have said, O Lord, I am exceedingly polluted and stained with sin and uncleanness, & no Leper was ever more vile and loathsome, then I am now in thy sight; neither is there any water to wash and purge me. But I beseech thee of thy mercy to wash me, and to sprinkle my soul with the blood of that immaculate Lamb, *Christ Jesus*, that can alone take away my sins, and

and so I shall be made clean and pure again.

Hence mark a miserable and cursed fruit of sin. No Leprosie did ever so defile the body of man in the time of the Jews, as sin doth stain and defile both body and soul. No dung-hill nor stinking carrion is so loathsome in the eyes of man, as an unclean sinner in the sight of God, till he be washed and purged in the blood of Christ.

This is the reason which the Lord used, *Josh. 7. 12.* why *Israel* felt before their enemies, and he went not forth with their Armies, when they fell before the men of *Ai*, *Therefore the children of Israel cannot stand before their enemies, but have turned their backs upon their enemies, because they are execrable.* We see then the nature of sin, how it maketh a man abominable and detestable in the sight of God.

Seeing this is the nature and fruit of sin, that it defileth and staineth both body and soul, and maketh them far more loathsome and vile than any Toad or Serpent, how should we ab-

Dott. 2.
Sin is a
Leprosie.

Use 1.

abhor sin and every wicked way? We will be very loath to eat poison or Rats-bane, or any thing else wherein is danger. Oh! sin is a kind of Rats-bane, which infects and poisons both body and soul. And therefore let us shun sin, and touch it not.

Use. 2. When as we be defiled with sin, and some de filthy and unclean in the sight of God, and more vile than a Leper, or Dung-hill, or Carrion, Toad, or Serpent: Oh let us pray with *David*, to be washed and purged from our filthinesse; let us repent of all our sin, bewail our uncleannesse. Let us by faith, as with a bunch of *hyssop*, besprinkle our souls with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Doct. 3. Seeing *David* desired to be purged with *hyssop*, we learn hence, That the Lord would not that man should despise such Ceremonies and Types of Christ, as he himself commanded in the time of the Law; and though it may seem a vain and needlesse thing to besprinkle them with a bunch of *hyssop*, dipped in the blood of a beast; yet, seeing it was the Commandement

The Ceremonies under the Law were but to lead us unto Jesus Christ.

ment of God, they did not despise the Ceremony, being a Type of the blood of Christ. When they could not behold with bodily eyes the blood of Christ, it pleased God by such Ceremonies and Types, to help their faith, by sprinkling the blood of a beast, to shew unto them, that they must be sprinkled in their souls with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Hence we learn by the example of *David*, and all the holy Fathers and Servants of God, in the time of the Law, to use all such Sacraments and Ceremonies, as God commands in his Word, for the helping of our faith. We cannot see the blood of Christ, nor touch it with our outward senses; yet the Lord hath appointed the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, that in them we might see, feel, touch, and taste, as it were the body and blood of Jesus Christ: And therefore all those which despise these Sacraments, making little or no account of them, shew, that they despise the Ordinance of God, and so make light of that which is ordained

Use
Obedi-
ence re-
quired to
God's
Ordi-
nances.

Doct. 4.
Christ's
blood alone
doth purge
our sins.
Heb. 9. 9.
1 Jo. 1. 7.
Rev. 1. 5
1 Jo. 1. 9.
1 Pet. 1. 2

ned for the good of their souls.

Mark further, when that *David* prayeth the Lord to purge him with *Hysop*, the word signifies, to purge by Sacrifice, even the Sacrifice of the Son of God, and by his death and blood-shedding, to purge his sins away. So as he confesserh, there is nothing in heaven or earth that is of force, to purge him from his offences and uncleanness, but the blood of Christ alone. It is not the blood of Bullocks, Lambs, and Goats, that can wash away the least spot of sin; but even the blood of that immaculate Lamb, Christ Jesus; and to him all the Sacrifices had relation, and shadowed our Saviour Jesus Christ, the true Paschall Lamb unto us.

The use
of the
Ceremo-
nies un-
der the
Law.

And this was the reason why *David* maketh mention of *Hysop*, that God would *purge him with Hysop*, because God, in the time of the Law, ordained this Ceremony for a confirmation of their faith, and to help the people of the *Jews* to the better sight and knowledge of the promised Messiah. For seeing our Saviour was not yet come

come into the world, and they could not see the work of Redemption as yet performed, the Lord would lead them by these Ceremonies unto Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, that they might see him, as it were, before their eyes: For when they saw a Beast slain, and the blood spilt, they then took a bunch of Hyssop, dipt in the blood of the beast, and besprinkled them that offered the same with the blood. They were thereby taught even so much, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and promised Messiah, should be slain and put to death, his blood shed for their sins, and they must by faith, as a bunch of Hyssop, besprinkle their souls with the blood of our Saviour, for the pardon of their sins.

It is true indeed, that the Lord hath eased us in the time of the Gospel, of all those old and antient Ceremonies; neither is it the will of God, that we should be clogged with the senseless, needlesse, and beggerly rudiments, being the Ceremonies and Traditions of men, which become not the simplicity of the Gospel. But yet hath in
mercy

*Note.**Gal. 4.8.*

mercy appointed certain helps and means, to lead us unto Christ Jesus : as the two Sacraments to help our faith. For we being as yet carnall, (alas) we cannot behold no more than we see. And therefore the Lord hath appointed them as helps, to lead us to this Saviour, to set him before our eyes in the water in Baptism, and Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper, that so our faith should be confirmed thereby, and we might even see Christ Jesus before our eyes. And therefore as *David* did carefully use such helps and ceremonies, as God commanded, for the strengthening of their faith; so let us be carefull to use the helps that God hath left under the Gospel, for the strengthening of our weak faith.

Purge me with hyssop.

The
meaning
of the
words.

THe meaning is this, Accept of that most perfect and everlasting Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, for the punishment due to my sin. As if he should have said, O Lord, I confesse I have sinned exceedingly, I have been borne in sinne, & have by murder and adultery

adultery deserved to be condemned eternally, and to have the curse and punishment due to my sin to be cast upon me. But I beseech thee in mercy to accept of the blood-shedding of thy Son, and my Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the satisfaction due to my sins. *David*, he watered his cheeks by day, and his couch by night. And indeed, tears of true penitents, are the wine of Angels. And those that have a sorrowfull heart, have the Sword of *David*, and the Bowe of *Jonathan*; for there is no Rhetorick in God's sight, to that of tears and sighs; for tears have a voice, as it may appear by *David's* words, *Thou hast heard the voice of my weeping*. And by our unfeigned tears, we offer violence to heaven, and tye the ears of God to the tongues of men.

And whereas the justification of a sinner in the sight of God, stands on two parts: First, remission and pardon of sin. Secondly, the imputation of Christ's righteousness: Methinks the Prophet requires and begs both these at the hands of God:

First,

First, to be purged, or, as the word signifies, to purge, (not by washing) but by sacrificing, to appease the wrath and anger of God, by the blood of Christ. Secondly, when he prayeth to be washed, he desireth to be made pure and righteous, not in his own righteousness, but onely in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, imputed to him, and laid hold upon by faith.

Dost. 5
Salvati-
on is to
be sought
for onely
in Christ

1 Io. 1. 7.

1 Pet. 1.

18.

Rev. 1. 5.

Seeing *David* entreats the Lord that he would *purge him*; that is, accept of the most perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, for the punishment due to his sins; we learn, That there is no name given under heaven, whereby a man shall be saved, but onely in the name of Jesus Christ. It is not the blood of Bullocks, Lambs, and Goats, that can wash away the least spot of sin; but onely the blood of that immaculate Lamb, Christ Jesus. It is Christ himself that must purge us, who is our High Priest; for we cannot pacifie and purifie our sins by Hyssop, or by the blood of a young Heifer, or by Oblations and Of-

Offerings ; nothing but Christ, and his merits can wash and purifie us from our sins : it is onely he that hath purged our sinnes by shedding his own blood, and hath procured us the pardon of our sins ; and now sitteth at the right hand of God, making still intercession for all true penitent sinners.

Hence we see the endlesse and unspeakable mercy of God to miserable men : who when no other meanes could be found, no Water or Herbe could heale the soule of a sinner, and wash him from sinne, and the punishment of it, but onely the precious blood of the Son of God, was content to give his own Sonne to Death for us, which made St. *John* to admire it : And if God hath not failed us in this, but could rather be content to have his onely Sonne put to Death, & hang on the Crosse, then wee should perish, how should he deny any smaller and lighter matters to us ?

Behold here the greatnesse and heinousnesse of mans sinns, which could be purged by no Angell in Heaven or

N

Earth,

Use 1.

Ioh. 3. 16.
Rom. 8.
32.

Use 2.

earth, but onely by the blood of Jesus Christ alone ; If all men and Angells should have dyed & been cast for ever into Hell-fire, they could not satisfie the infinite wrath of God for one sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ must be shed, else we can have no pardon.

Use 3.

This condemnes that wicked and erroneous Doctrine of the Papists, who teach indeed, that Christ by his Death, hath satisfied Gods justice for the fault and eternall punishment due to their sinnes : but men must either in this life by workes, or buy it of the Pope, or else in Purgatory satisfie Gods justice for temporall punishments : Now then what is this, but to make the sacrifice and death of Christ imperfect, when as it must be patched and pieced with mens merits? but we beleeve and hold, Christs Death is a sufficient Sacrifice for all our sinns.

Use 4.

Rom. 6.

Gal. 3.

Would you then have the pardon of your sinns? every sin deserves Death and the Curse of God : Now there is no way but this, to beleeve in Jesus Christ,

Christ, to embrace him by Faith, that so God the Father may for his sake pardon our sinnes, accept of his Death and Passion for the punishment of them all.

And that we may be purged from our sinnes, both the fault and the punishment, by the Bloud and Sacrifice of Christ, we must first repent of them with *David*, be grieved for them, bewaile them, amend our lives and become new Creatures in Christ Jesus, we must begge for pardon of them at the hands of God : wee must do with our sins, as *Phineas* did with *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, pierce them even through and through.

Secondly, besides wee must be sprinkled with Hyssop, that is, as in the time of the Law, they dipped the Hyssop in the blood of the beast, & so besprinkled the person to be cleansed : even so must we by faith, as it were with a bunch of Hyssop, apply the blood of Christ, and by faith besprinkle our defiled Consciences, it will cleanse us from all our sins, & satisfy the wrath of God for the punishment.

But if men either doe not repent of them, and leave their sinnes, or do not come with faith, to apply the blood of Christ, they cannot have pardon : As if there were a soveraign playster to cure any sore, if a man do not apply it to the wound, but let it lye in a box, it will do him no good : So unlesse wee apply the blood of Christ to our wounds and sores by faith, alas it cannot help us : And as the woman with the bloody issue touched Christs garment and was healed ; So if wee can by faith touch the blood of our Saviour, & apply it to our selves, it will heale all the bleeding wounds of sinne.

The second request is, that God would wash him and make him pure, not imputing his offences unto him, but covering them in the Death and Obedience of his Son Jesus Christ : And therefore in the second part of this verse, he prayeth for the imputation of Christs Righteousnesse: Namely, that God would not onely remit the punishment due to his sinnes, but look upon him as he is in Christ covered

vered with his righteousness, and that God would account him just for our Saviours obedience, holiness, satisfaction and righteousness. For when God beholds a poor sinner covered with righteousness, holiness, and obedience, of his Sonne our Saviour, then he accounts him as no sinner, but just and righteous: Even as a man beholding any red thing through a red glass, it appeareth red, or of the same colour; so if the Lord look on us in our Saviour, we seeme righteous and holy before him.

Psal. 32.

1, 2.

Whereas the Prophet *David* intreats the Lord to wash him, he shews that he was defiled with sin, and stained with uncleanness, and so stood in great need of Gods mercy, to cleanse his filthy soul, and defiled conscience, now polluted with most vile adultery, and filthy uncleanness: That his soul was now besprinkled with the innocent blood of that faithful servant, and loyall subject, *Urias* the Hittite. And as it was with *David*, sin infected him, made him vile and loathsome, filthy and abominable in

Doct. 6.
Sin defiles a man.

the sight of God: Even so it doth begrime the face of the best of Gods children, it stains and pollutes them both in soul and body: yea, no carnion is more loathsome and odious than a sinner defiled and polluted with sin, is in the sight of God.

The Leprosie is a loathsome disease, it infecteth the body, and the very garments; yea, the stones and timber: But this spiritual leprosie, sinne, infects the whole man: body and soul: yea, it infecteth heaven and earth, and all other creatures in the world; and there is nothing that can take away the spots and blemishes of sin, but only the precious blood of Jesus Christ, laid hold on by true faith.

Use 1.

Well, seeing all of us are thus defiled with sin, as *David* was, in soul and body, let us desire to be washed, let us bewaile them, loath, and hate them, intreat the Lord that he would not impute our sins unto us, but cover them under the robe of Christs righteousness: And that we should abhor every sin for this cause; because it defiles us, it pollutes us, and makes us un-

wor-

worthy to appear in Gods presence.

Seeing *David*, though an holy Prophet of God, a man after Gods own heart, yet desires the Lord to wash him from his sinnes, and to cover them in the obedience of Christ Jesus applyed by faith : we see that no man is able to stand before the face of God in his own righteousness, in his own works or worthinesse : For if any might, who might better have done it then *David*, a man truly justified, a holy Prophet, a man after Gods own heart ? Yea, the Prophet *Esay* saith, that all our Righteousnesse is no better then a stained clout, full of blood, and all pollution : And as *St. Paul* desires that hee may not bee found in his own righteousness, and worthinesse, at the day of Judgment, but in the righteousness of Christ, hid hold on by Faith. And therefore let us renounce all our owne goodnesse and worthinesse, and account all but as dung in respect of Christ and his righteousness. And as for the Church of Rome, wee may see their intolerable Pride, that they

Use 2.

Isa. 64. 6.

Phil. 3. 9.
1 Cor. 1.
o.

doe so much rest and relye upon their own goodnesse and worthinesse, merits, and righteousness, to stand upon it, and appear in it for remission of sins, and life eternal. But (alass) if *Paul*, *David*, and all the Saints of God abhor themselves in dust and ashes, desire to be purged and washed, and covered in the obedience and Righteousnesse of Jesus Christ, yea, count all their own righteousness but as dung, and dare not appeare in it before the seat of Gods judgments, but in the Righteousnesse of Christ: shall any Papists of them dare to stand before God in judgment, in his own Righteousnesse and worthinesse? No, no; he shall tremble and quaille, and not abide so great and glorious a presence.

*I shall be clean, I shall be whiter
than Snow.*

IN these words the Prophet shewes the event and issue of this, when a man doth truly repent, is reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, and is wash'd and purged from his sins by faith in Christs blood; then he is made of a
most

most vile and loathsome sinner, a most blessed and most holy child of God ; o: a filthy unclean limb of the Devill, a blessed member of Jesus Christ, beaurifull and glorious in the eyes of God, being covered in Christs Righteousnesse.

Seeing *David* saith, when *God* shall pardon him his sins on his true Repentance and be reconciled unto him, covering his sinne in the merits and obedience in Christ, *Then yee shall be clean* : Then before a man repent, be reconciled to God by Jesus Christ, and be purged from his sinnes, he is most unclean & filthy, vile, loathsome, and abominable in the sight of *God* : and indeed so he is, no carrion worse, no Toad so ugly, nor Serpent so full of poyson, as a filthy sinner polluted with sinne, till he repent, get the pardon of them, and be reconciled to God by Christ, I pray you take knowledge of this Doctrine, whatsoever thou art high, low, rich, poore, young, old, Prince, or Noble, till thou repent, till thou turn to God till thou get the pardon of thy sinnes,

N 5

and

Doct. 7.
The wo-
ful estate
of all na-
turall
men.

and be washed by faith in the blood of Iesus Christ, thou art most vile & miserable, thou art most unclean & filthy, thou art more ugly than the venomous Toad, more loathsome than the Serpent, more filthy and stinking than the Carrion : yea, no creature is so loathsome before God as a filthy sinner, that lives in sinne without Repentance, that is not washed and purged from them in the blood of Christ. *David*, he thought he could never be clean, and purged of his sinne, till he had confessed them, and laboured to repair the ruines of so great offences, which made him so courageously accuse himselfe, defying the Devill and his flattering pleasures. *David* did not leave one sin, but thrust it head-long out of his heart by Repentance and contrition.

Use 1.

Well, seeing this is the woefull and miserable estate of all impenitent sinners, how should this move every one with speed to repent, to turne to God, to seek to be reconciled to God by his Son, and our onely Saviour, to desire pardon and forgivenesse of all his

his finnes, to be washed and cleansed from them all in and by the blood & merits of Christ ? For this know, I say, till thou art reconciled to God, dost repent, art washed and cleansed, thy case is fearfull, thou wert better be a Toad than a Man without this : thou maist goe in silke and velver, in gey and golden apparrell, thou maist have a fair body, perfume thee with sweet odours, &c. but till thou repent thou art fleshy and loathsome in Gods sight.

Oh how should this serve to plucke down the pride of many impenitent transgressours ? men & women thinke highly of themselves, ruffle it out in Silk and Velver of the newest fashion; but all this while they know not that their poor soules are loathsome in Gods sight, that God hates them, and cannot abide them : Oh then be washed, be cleansed in the blood of Christ, which alone can wash away our finnes.

Oh that men would remember that saying of Christ, *Thou art poor, blind, miserable, and naked*; then they would

1Sa. 1. 16.

Rev. 3.

14.

Iob. 42. 6.

would say with *Job*, *I abhor my selfe, and repent in dust and ashes* : Then they would never give any rest unto their souls untill they have repented, & got pardon, be reconciled, and washed from their filthy sins.

Seeing *David* acknowledgeth, that when he shall repent, get pardon of his finnes, be reconciled to God, be washed from the filthiness of his sin; then *he shall be clean and white, yea, most white, even as snow* : Hence we learn, that as a filthy transgressour that lives and goes on still in sin without repentance, there is no creature more ugly, hatefull, and unclean : So the child of God, that doth repent, that is washed in the blood of Christ, reconciled to God, he is a blessed and glorious creature, most beautifull and fair in the sight of God ; not by any goodness or worthinesse of his own, but by the mercy of God so accompting us, and the Merits and worthinesse of his Sonne *Jesus Christ*, in whose Righteousnesse wee shall be found Righteous, and by whose merits and worthinesse wee are covered.

Can. 1. 7.

Eze. 16. 9

10, 11, 12

Rev. 13. 8

1 Co. 9,

10.

The

The Saints of God go in long white Robes, which are made white in the bloud of the Lamb.

Seeing this is the blessed and happy estate of all those that do truly repent, be reconciled to God, embrace and beleve in Jesus Christ, are washed & cleansed from their finnes in his Bloud, and covered in his Righteousnesse : O how should it move every man and woman to run to God, to forsake their evill wayes, and their filthy finnes, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, to beleve, to become the Sons and Daughters of God. It is an honourable thing to be a Sonne to an earthly King, to be cloathed in cloath of gold, &c. But if we compare this with the blessed and glorious estate of Gods children, it is but dung and beggery, it is but like rotten rags and beggers clouts, taken off the Dunghill :

He that is wise, sha'l shine as the firmament ; and he that converts many to righteousness, shall shine as the Sun in the firmaments ; O then again and again, let us repent, let us be reconciled to God, let this wedding garment,

Dan. 12.

ment, which will make us beautified before God.

Use 2.

Another use is this, seeing that the state of Gods Children even in this world is so blessed, and so glorious so beautifull and excellent, being reconciled to God, washed in the blood of Christ, and cloathed with the most pure robe of Christs righteousness: here is matter of comfort to all the poor children of God, whom the world is not worthy of. Alas, they are esteemed as beggars, they are esteemed as vile, and base, miserable, and cast-awayes, by ungodly men, they are made as the dung in the streets, and as the off-scouring of the world, and men even tread and trample them under their feet: Now what is that which may comfort the hearts of Gods children? surely this, that though they seem vile, base and miserable in the blind eyes of all sinfull men, yet they be most white, beautifull, and glorious in the eyes of God our heavenly Father: Though the world hates us, condemne us, be weary of us, scorn & abhor us; let us remem-
ber

ber the Lord loves us, takes delight in us, we are fair and most beaurifull in his sight. They doe not see what we be, they cannot know that we are little Princes, Sons, and great Heirs of the Kingdome of Heaven, the sons and daughters of the great God, and therefore this may teach us patience, seeing wee know that God loves us, & that we are dear unto him, though the world hate us : so it is with many Prophets of God, and true beleivers, whom the World was not worthy of.

Lastly, here is matter of great comfort and consolation to all grievous sinners, that have committed many & grievous finnes, that if they will unfeignedly repent & turne to God, embrace and lay hold on Christ, God will make them of the cursed firebrands of Hell, heirs of the kingdome of heaven ; of the limbs of the Devill the members of Jesus Christ, of adulterers and filthy sinners, such as *Joseph* was, chaste and pure, and the holy servants of God. This the Lord promisseth men, that if they will repent, turn to God, & forsake their sinfull wayes,

The

1 Io. 3. 2

Heb. 11

Isa. 1. 18.

19.

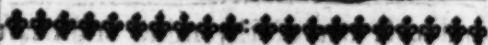
Then, *Though their sins were as red as scarlet, I will make them as white as snow; though they were as crimson, yet will I make them as clean as wool:* This is to say, though men be guilty of bloody sinnes, notorious crimes, as *David* of murther, uncleanness, whoredome, adultery, coverousnesse, swearing, contempt of the word of God, &c. Yet if thou hast the grace to repent, certainly the Lord will most thoroughly purge & wash away all thy sins, he will seal thee a generall pardon of them all, if thou wilt onely repent, and lay hold upon Christ.

O then let me speak unto you in the name of God: hast thou bin a vile blasphemers? hast thou bin a contemner of the Word? a persecutor of Gods children? hast thou been a murtherer, a cruell oppressor, usurer? hast thou been an adulterer, a filthy liver? Well, if thou now repent, turn to God, bewailes thy sinnes, beg pardon for them, if thou wilt renounce, leave and forsake them, become a new creature in Christ Jesus, and amend thy sinfull life, & as *David* did, dethrone Satan,
and

and cast out of thy mind and heart those legions of sinnes, which by nature we have, and by our over-sight committed : Loe then, God doth this day offer mercy unto thee, he will embrace thee, as he did the Prodigall Child, he will wash thee in the blood of his own Son, he will cover thee in his Righteousnesse, he will pardon all thy sinnes, and never lay them to thy charge, he will make of thee that art a vile and miserable sinner, a very fire-brand of hell, a blessed member of Jesus Christ. And therefore let not the number or greatnesse of thy sins hinder thee ; for if thou canst repent, God will pardon them all, and receive thee to mercy : O then, if thou wilt not for all this repent, and turn to God, leave and forsake thy sinnes and impieties, become a new creature in Christ Jesus, but lye in thy sinnes, and wallow in the filth of them still, and harden thy heart against all the sweet & gracious offers of mercy, how art thou worthy to perish if thou shalt despise so great salvation.

Luk. 15

2 Cor. 5.
19.



VERSE. 6.

*Make me to hear of joy and gladness,
that the bones which thou hast broken
may rejoyce.*

David
here in-
treats for
peace of
consci-
ence.

Sin had
taken a-
way his
inward
joy.

David having in the former Verse craved mercy at the hands of God, for the pardon of his finnes, which were both many and great, he doth in this verse beg at Gods hands, the blessed fruit of the same: Namely, the blessed and comfortable perswasions of Gods mercy, and assurance of his love, for the pardon of his finnes, that God would even testifie unto his poore soule, and wounded conscience, by his spirit inwardly, that he was appeased and pacified with him, and in Jesus Christ reconciled unto him, that so being thus satisfied of Gods love, of reconciliation with God, and the remission of his finnes, his wounded conscience might be comforted, his dying soule, and heavy heart might be restored, and his exceeding sorrow might be mitigated and asswaged.

David

David now at length knew, that nature was an ill guide to Heaven, therefore he desires the Lord to direct him in his wayes, that hee might hear of joy and gladness, *That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce.*

Parts of
this
verse.

In this same verse note two speciall poynts. First, what is the thing David so earnestly craved of God : Namely, that he would cause him to have comfortable and happy newes of Gods mercy, and assurance of the remission of his sins, *Make me to hear, &c.*

Secondly, the end wherefore he so begs and requests for this : Namely, that his broken heart, and bleeding Conscience might be comforted, and his unspeakable griefe by the feeling of Gods love might be finished, *That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce.*

Make me to hear.

AS if he should have said, O Lord, I beseech thee to witness thy love and favour unto me ; yea, I beseech thee send thy blessing and holy Spirit, to certifie my conscience

science of the blessed pardon of all my finnes, that thou wilt not enter into judgement with me for them.

And that which *David* doth here confesse of himselfe, all the children of God shall one day be sure to find by experience, that sin doth spoyle them of their inward peice and joy. Oh then, if wee could remember how sweet the joy and peace is, which by sinne we lose, for the vain and transitory pleasures of sinne, which are but for a season, we would never make so bad exchange.

The main point is, what it is that *David* so earnestly craves of God: namely, that God would assure him of the blessed pardon of his sins.

But some may say this seems needlesse, did not the Lord send *Nathan* to him, who (after *David* had confessed his sin) told him, *The Lord hath pardoned thy sinnes, thou shalt not dye.*

2 Sam. 12
13.

How then comes it to passe, that here he prayes the Almighty to cause him to heare and feele this, the remission of his sin? I answer; first, it is true, that *Nathan* the Prophet of God, did assure

assure him of the remission of his finnes upon his true repentance : But yet *David's* heart being wounded with sinne, could not so fully feele and finde the assurance of Gods love, and remission of his finnes, and therefore entreares the Lord to certifie his conscience inwardly by his Spirit, and to assure him of the same. Secondly, I answer, that though *David* heard *Nathan* tell him, that the Lord would remit his offences, yet he judged the outward testimony of all men and Angels as nothing, unlesse the certificate and testimony of the Holy Ghost goe with it, inwardly to certifie, assure, and perswade the poor wounded conscience of Gods love and favour.

Hence we may learn sundry poynts of Instruction. First, that as *David* prayes to be assured of Gods love, and the remission of his finnes : so every true Child of God that beleeves, & repents of all his offences, may know and be resolved in the confidence of Gods love and favour, and the forgiveness of them all. And in the Articles

Deut. 1.
Every
child of
God may
be assured
of the
pardon
of his
finnes.

ticles of our faith, we doe profess, we beleeve the remission of our finnes, & life everlasting : And seeing we pray for this, that God would forgive our sins and trespasses, therefore we believe it, else we sin in praying for it : so that every one that truly repenteth, and embraceth Jesus Christ, is a new creature, hates vile wayes, endeavours in heart and life to please God, that he may know, and be assured that he is reconciled to God, and his sins pardoned.

2 Pet. 1.

Use 1.

This condemnes that hellish Doctrine of the Papists, who teach and hold that no man can be assured of the pardon of his sins, unless God send a Revelation from Heaven to doe it : And that it is a vertue of faith, to doubt of Gods love. But how did Paul doubt, when he saith, *I am fully perswaded, &c.* Alas, how dare a vile sinner, not justified nor assured of Gods love, and the pardon of his sins, how dares he come to call on God, and make his prayer unto him ? Dares a Traytor come to his King, or speak unto him, nor having pardon ? Well,

this

Ro. 8. 38.

Iob 13. 15

19. 25.

Psal. 125.

1.

this Doctrine of doubting, it is a rack for all wounded Consciences, & afflicted soules. when they cannot tell whether God loveth or hateth them, nor know not that their sins be pardoned.

And therefore that religion which teacheth doubtings, and pronounceth them accursed, who hold that a man may be assured of salvation, wee accurse it as a Doctrine, enemy to Faith & Salvation. And indeed, it is strange to see, that whereas they teach, a man is able to fulfill the whole Law of God, & by his workes to merit Eternall life; yet they accuse him, if he say he is sure to be saved; so directly doth one point of their false Doctrine impugne another. Indeed it is no marvelle though their Religion can yeeld no comfort for the certainty of salvation, seeing they draw men from off the Foundation Christ Jesus, in whom onely it is promised, that we shall find rest for our soules.

Seeing *David* prayes for this assurance of Gods love, to be assured of the pardon of his finnes by his spirit, and that upon his true repentance, this shews

shewes that the confidence that most men have, is a fond presumption and security : They would not doubt of Gods love for all the world ; they beleeved ever since they were borne, & thus they brag of their strong faith, but they deceive themselves; for till a man doe repent, turn to God, beleeve in Christ, become a new creature, he can have no assurance of Gods love or pardon for his sins.

Let all true Christians examine themselves, whether they feel and find this blessed assurance and perswasion of Gods love, and the pardon of their sins. If thou hast it, make much of it, lose it not : If thou want it, use all meanes, give all diligence to get it, repent, turn to God, begge mercy and pardon for thy sinnes, embrace Jesus Christ believe in him, that thou must be assured, & never be at rest till thou canst say, I am perswaded of Gods love in Christ Jesus : *I know my Redeemer liveth* : I am perswaded I am the child of God, else a man can have no joy, peace, nor comfort.

Doct. 2

Though *Nathan* had told him his
sins

sins were forgiven, yet *David* could not be assured, till he felt the inward assurance and certificate of Gods Spirit: to perswade and witnesse the love of God unto him for the pardon of his sins.

Hence we learn, that it is not the testimony of all men and Angels, that can assure us in our souls of Gods love and pardon of our sins, without the inward speciall certificate and perswasion of Gods Spirit, who is called *the Spirit of Adoption*, because he doth reveal, yea, perswade and also assure our souls that we be adopted. If *Peter, Paul, Nathan*, yea all the world, say, if an Angel from heaven should tell me I am the child of God, yet unlesse God doth further certifie my conscience inwardly by the Spirit, I should not be assured, but doubt still even as *David* did in this place. Although *Nathan* had said, *Thy sins are forgiven*; yet *David* could not be assured, untill he had the inward and comfortable perswasion of Gods holy Spirit. Men cannot know the secret counsell of God, they may de-

O

ceive

Man's testimony of the remission of sin is nothing without the testimony of Gods Spirit.

Ro. 8.15.

Note.

Rom. 8.
15, 16.

2 Col. 1.
22.

ceive and be deceived; but the Spirit of God knowes all things, and the Apostle saith, *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again: but ye have received the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Aba Father. The same spirit beareth witnesse to our spirit, that we are the children of God, & because ye are sons, therefore God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, whereby we cry Abba Father.* Again, *God the Father hath sealed us, and put into our hearts the earnest of his spirit.* So that you see, it is the onely work of the Spirit, to assure our hearts & consciences of Gods love, & the pardon of our sins, & without this inward certificate and assurance of the Spirit, all the testimonies of men and Angels cannot assure our consciences.

Well then, seeing that there can be no assurance in a man's conscience, of the remission of our sins, and life eternall, but by the inward certificate and testimony of Gods spirit, let us pray for this, labour to find and feel our hearts perswaded, and assured inwardly by the Holy Ghost, of the pardon

David's Repentance.

301

don of our sins, and the love of God in Christ. *Prove your selves whether ye be in the faith.* And because men are deceived generally with a fond presumption, and foolish opinion, that they be the children of God, and shall be saved; and this carnall presumption is more common, than true saving faith. I will shew, how we may know this testimony and certificate of God's love, when it is in our consciences.

First, The Spirit of God assures no such man remission of his sins, but such as be humbled for them, repent of them, leave and forsake them, become new creatures, and walk in newness of life. And therefore if thou livest in sin, be neither humbled for them, nor bewail them; hast an intention to live still in thy sins, ignorance, lying, swearing, covetousness, uncleanness, &c. Thou canst have no assurance of God's love; & this assurance of thine, if thou hast any, it is meer self-conceit. For where men do not repent and turn to God, and amend their lives, there is no faith, neither is the Spirit of God remaining in

2 Cor. 13
5.

Marks of
God's
Spirit.

r. That
man re
pents of
his sin.

O 2 them;

them, and therefore they cannot be assured of Gods love and mercy.

2. Is perswaded of the Spirit,

Secondly, the Spirit of Adoption doth not onely tell a man, that he is the child of God, but doth by sundry arguments and reasons, perswade the child of God, that he is elected, that God loves him, and that his sins be forgiven. But wicked men have no such thoughts in their hearts, onely they have a fond opinion and conceit, which is no good ground, neither did the Spirit of God ever perswade their hearts thereunto.

3. The effects will appear.

We shall know the testimony of Gods Spirit, that it is sure and sound, by the fruits and effects of it; for if the Spirit of God do truly testify the love of God, for the remission of our sins, and life eternall; then it will follow, that we shall hate our sins, loath and abhor them, because they grieve our most gracious God, and loving Father. Yea, we shall desire in all things to honour the Almighty, to do his will, to please and serve him. So that if we find and feel these things, a true hatred and dislike of sin, because it

dishonours the Lord, a desire to live in holinesse and righteousness before him all our daies, it is a certain signe, that the Spirit of the Lord doth assure us of our reconciliation with the Lord. But if men find not this, no hatred of sin, no love to obey his will, and keep his commandments, but ignorance, rebell on, and the like; let them brag what they will of their strong faith, feeling of God's love, and I know not what; yet it is certain, they have not the testimony of God's Spirit, which *David* prayeth for here, but a fond and foolish opinion, proceeding of self-love, carnall security, and devilish presumption, which in the end will fail them.

Make me to hear of joy and gladnesse.

IN these words, note a third point of doctrine, namely, Whence and where *David* looked for comfort: as from the Word of God, hearing the same opened, and preached unto him. So that in this example we learn, that all true comfort, and spirituall consolation, is to be learned and searched out of the Word of God; that is the

Doct. 3.
God can
veyes
comfort
unto us
by the
ministry
of his ho-
ly Word.

Joh. 5. 63

Joh. 1. 13

Ep. 1. 13.

Store-house of heavenly comfort. And therefore our Saviour Christ bids us search there for consolation: *Search the Scripture, for in them ye think to have eternall life.* Again, it is called *spirit and life*, because God uses the preaching and ministry of the Gospell to beget spirituall life. It is called, *The word of truth, even the Gospell of our salvation.* The Lord might have illuminated the mind of the *Eunuch*, *Act. 8.* by the immediate working of his own Spirit, and have made him understand the Scripture which he was reading, without any interpreter; but it pleased the Lord to do it by the ministry of *Philip*. He might have likewise communicated his Spirit to *Corne'ius*, *Act. 10.* but the Lord would not do it, but by the ministry of *Peter*. According to that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 1. 11. It hath pleased God by the foolishnesse of preaching to save so many as believe.* And so many shall believe as are ordained to eternall life. If then thou be desirous with *David*, to hear of joy and gladnesse, and to have assurance of the pardon

pardon of thy finnes, then reverence the ministry of the Word, by which the Lord communicateth his Spirit to such as he will save. And surely this must needs be an exceeding comfort to all the children of God, that God doth not onely freely forgive them their sins, but also telleth them of the forgivenesse of the same, sealing up their hearts by his holy Spirit, the testimony thereof.

Seeing God hath appointed the ministry of his holy Word to be the means to work all true and spirituall comfort: Oh then in all our needs, wants, and distresses, let us search the Word of God, there is comfort to be found, many heavenly and sweet promises of the Gospell, to quicken & renew our poor distressed souls; and this the Prophet *David* knew by good experience, that there is more sound comfort in the feeling of Gods love, than in all the World besides. It may well be compared to the tree, *St. John* speaketh of, which beareth twelve manner of fruits, & the leaves of the tree serve to cure and heal dis-

Use 1.

*Psa. 119.
55.
Pl. 84. 1.
Pl. 45.
Psa. 46*

*Rev. 22.
2.*

ed and wounded souls, and the fruit of the Tree of the Word of God is most sweet and pleasant : and therefore let us , if we would desire true comfort indeed, seek it in the means : namely in the Word and Ministry of the holy Gospell.

Is 2.

This sheweth, that all those be enemies unto their own souls , that despise the Ministry of the Word, and the Preaching of the Gospell. If ever thou find one jot of true comfort, thou must have it in the means that God hath ordained : namely , in the Ministry of the Word : let men seek it elsewhere, and they shall find none. Men may seek delight and joy in their gold and silver , in merry company, in this, or that, as men use to do ; but (alas) they cannot find it there : yet, experience sheweth , that distressed souls full of woe and misery , could never find true comfort in any thing, save in the Ministry of the Word of God, and there they have found endlesse comfort , by hearing of the blessed & saving promises of the Gospell : and therefore , if a man shall neglect

or

or despise the Word preached, how can they ever find joy or gladness, or any dram of saving comfort?

Whereas *David* craves of God, that he would cause him to hear of joy and gladness; that is, that his sins were all pardoned, and he reconciled to God in Christ, that so he might have some good matter of joy and gladness. For the eye of *David's* reason made him see, more then the eye of nature could let him see; for till *Nathan* did open the cause by a Similitude, he thought all was well on his part, which took *David's* ears and attention the better.

We learn hence, that there is no sound joy or comfort in any man or woman, but onely in the free pardon of his sins, and feeling of God's love in Christ: and all other love which men do frame and devise unto themselves, alas, alas, it is but from the teeth outward, it is not sound, nor durable, it is but carnall and earthly, & will easily be lost. Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man rejoyce in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength,

Use 3.
Doff. 4.
Where
sin is not
pardon-
ed, there
can be no
true joy.

Jer. 9. 23.

not the rich man in his riches ; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he knoweth me to be the Lord: & without this, there can be no perfect joy, as we see in David, and so in all distressed offenders, till they feel the assurance of Gods love, for the pardon of their sins.

Je 1.

This shews, that the common joy of most men and women is but a carnall joy, earthly, and vain ; it is not spirituall, it is not true joy: For all the while they eat, drink, make themselves merry, laugh, and be joviall, they live in sin, in danger of God's anger and condemnation ; no feeling of God's love, no assurance of salvation ; & then, how can they have any true joy ? for this proceeds in the assurance of God's love, and the remission of sin.

Ro. 14. 7.

The kingdom of God standeth not in meat and drink ; but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost. But unto the wicked there is no peace.

Isa. 57.

21.

Object.

Object. But do we not see that wicked men that live in sin, that be notorious finners, swearers, blasphemers, drunkards, &c. that these live in mirth and jollity, in eating, drinking,

in ease and idlenesse ; and the children of heaven have much sorrow and heavinessse, grief, trouble, and wrong?

Ans. Yea, it is true, that wicked men that live in sin, passe their daies in eating, drinking, sport, and pastime, no sorrow, nor heavinessse, but spend their daies in pleasure ; *but suddenly they go down to Hell.*

Ans.

Iob 17. 23
Ezal. 32.

Now who will call this a true joy? Nay, it is a swinish and brutish joy, carnall and fleshly, for if they knew all, and saw their misery, that they be in danger of Gods eternall vengeance, of hell and damnation, Oh then they would mourn, and turn all their mirth into tears. If a Traytor be apprehended, arraigned, convicted, and condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, and look for nothing but present death, and execution, and yet for all the sentence pronounced unto him, that he should die, would fall to eating and drinking, (as the world goes now) rather then to pray, and repent him of his wickednesse: thinking onely to riot and revell, to chear his heart before he depart this World,

would

lam. 4. 9

Ise 3.

Re. 14. 26

would not all men say he was a mad man, and out of his wits? This is the case of all lewd men, they already are condemned, they want nothing but execution, and lie in danger of hell-fire: Alas, what cause have they to be merry, but rather mourn, and grieve? therefore, their mirth is but madnesse.

Seeing then we can have no peace of conscience, nor any sound comfort, untill we have the feeling of God's love, and full assurance of the remission of our sins, let us never give any rest to our souls, untill we have repented, and got some blessed persuasion of the Almighty's love in Christ: and some warrant from his Spirit that our sins are done away; for the Kingdome of the Lord stands not in any outward things, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Alas, if any of us, were condemned to Death, lying in Prison, Looking for nothing but present execution, what could do us good? There were then no joy in wife nor children, lands nor livings, meat or musick: No, no, unlesse we have the Kings pardon, we

cannot be merry, but would contemne all those things: Even just so, when a poor sinner is arraigned, and condemned in his own conscience, for his offences, hath no feeling of God's love and mercy for the remission of them, how is it possible that he should have one dram of joy, till the Lord in mercy seal to his poor soul a generall pardon by his Spirit, dipped in the blood of Christ Jesus? Well then, let us never be at peace, nor give any rest unto our souls, untill we have got a comfortable perswasion of Gods mercy for pardon of our sins.

*I hat the bones which thou hast broken
may rejoyce.*

THese words contain in them the second part of this Verse: and is as much, as if the Prophet should have said, O Lord, I intreat thee for Christ Jesus sake, to forgive me my heinous and bloody sins, and give me the blessed assurance of the same in my soul and conscience, that so feeling & finding that thou art reconciled, and hast pardoned my sins, my soul which is wounded and overwhelmed with grief

Second
part of
the verse.

and sorrow, as my bones and most strong parts are wasted and consumed, and my strength decayed, may be restored, cheered up, and gladdened.

By this speech he would shew his extream grief, and sorrow for his sins, which was so extream, that it wasted and consumed his strength, dried up his bones, and spent his marrow.

Hence we see, that there is no sorrow to the heart of Gods children, like that sorrow which is for sin, and offendeth our most gracious God, and mercifull Father. Great is the grief of an husband, that loseth a kind and vertuous wife: And who can expresse the sorrow of a Father or Mother for the death of their dear and onely child? But yet all the sorrow in the World is not compared unto the sorrow and grief of heart for sins: This will wound the very conscience, and cause much weeping, and wayling, and great heavinesse; it will even weaken the body, and strength of nature; and if it be of any long continuance, it will wast the bones, and consume away the flesh: *When I held my tongue, my bones consumed.* And

Pf. 31.3,
4.

Doct. 5.
No sorrow in
the godly
like the
sorrow
for sin.

Lu. 16.2.
Psal. 32.
Psal. 6.2.
Psal. 38.

And the reason is this, because a poor sinner, being wounded in conscience for sin, and not feeling the love and mercy of God for pardon, sees nothing but hell, nothing but damnation and the wrath of God, which is a fearfull thing, for this causeth torments, and fears, and terrours, and makes even a hell in a wounded conscience. And of all plagues & judgments, what can be more terrible and fearfull, than to see the heavy weight and burthen of God's anger, which is unsupportable? For, as Solomon saith, *A man may bear his sickness & infirmity, but a wounded conscience who can bear?* Again, *It is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Seeing this is the wofull fruit of sin, that it thus woundeth the conscience, and wasteth the flesh, and the bones, we see, how God hateth sin, even in his dearest children, so as if they will needs sin and rebell against God, they must feel the wofull and terrible smart of it. And therefore let us above all things shun it, avoid it, and not dare to commit it: Oh it will
cost

Prov. 18.
14.
Heb. 10.
21.

See I.

cost thee dear, it will make thy heart to ake, it will breed thee much wo and misery in soul and body.

Use 2.

We see the miserable blockishness of all carnall men & women, who are not ashamed to say, That they had rather deal with God than with men for sin: but alas, they never knew nor felt the weight of sin; but if God should once open their eyes, and let them see their sins, and feel the weight of his anger for them; Oh! then they will confesse, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. *If he be angry (saith David) blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

Use 3

Let us learn, that it is not some light sorrow, or small sigh, or, *Lord have mercy upon me*, will serve for our sin against God. No, no, let us labour to be humbled more deeply for our transgressions, seeing by them we offend a most mercifull God; yea, if it were possible, to shed even tears of blood for our offences; for all were little enough, to shew or expresse thy grief for sin, we should or ought to have.

Which

Which thou hast broken.

THat is, which thou, O God my Lord, in justice hath justly inflicted upon me for my great and grievous offences.

Dost. 6.
There is
no re-
spect of
persons
with God

Hence then behold, that God is most righteous and just in punishing and correcting the iniquities of men: He cannot wink at sin in any man; no not in them that be dear and near unto him, as may appear in his holy Servant *David*, a man after his owne heart, a holy Prophet of the Lord; yet if he rebell, and play the wanton, he is sure to be scourged for it, as here in this place: So when he numbred the people, so *Hezekiah*, *Jerusalem* the holy City; yea, if the Son of the Almighty which had no sin, take up our iniquities upon him, he must be punished, the iustice of God will seize upon him. And the reason of this is manifest, because God doth so hate sin, that he cannot wink at it in any.

1 Sam. 24
Esay 39.
Mat. 23.

If the Lord doth so sharply and severely punish iniquity in his dearest children, whom he loves best, Oh then, what will become of all those

1st 4.

1 Pet. 4.
17.
Jer. 20.
29.

that are his enemies ? *If to the green Tree, what to the dry ?* If judgement begin at the house of God , Oh then what shall be the end of those that obey not the Word of God ? if God do so severely handle his own people, then much more the wicked and prophane ones.

May rejoyce.

Doct. 7.
Pardon
of sinne
brings
true joy.

Psal. 32.
Rom. 14.
17.

HENCE we learn, that there is wonderfull joy and gladnesse in the hearts of all those, who have the pardon of their offences : it is a matter of endlesse comfort , to feel the love of the Almighty in a min's soul ; to know God to be my gracious Father, Jesus Christ to be my Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost to be my comforter, it is matter of endlesse comfort, *Blessed is he , whose wickednesse is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.* Again, *The Kingdome of God stands not in meat and drink, but in the Righteousness, Peace and joy in the ho'y Ghost.*

We learn hence, that such as continue in any known sin unrepented of, cannot look for peace from God ; for where goes sin , there goes the curse,

Esa

Iſa. 48. There is no peace to the wicked. God doth even wage war, and enter into a combat against all impenitent sinners. This the Prophet speaketh, *Pſ. 7. God doth whet his sword, bend his bowe, and make it ready against the wicked.* And therefore, if we want this, and have not the feeling of God's love, and assurance of his mercy for the pardon of all our offences. Oh then, let us labour for it, use all means to attain unto it, pray for it, and give no rest unto thy soul, untill thou hast it. And if thou hast it, Oh then, make much of it, lose it not, though thou mightest gain a Kingdom: For all the world will not afford one dram of comfort without it. And take heed of sin, which will drive it away, dimn it, and damp it, and deprive us of the feeling of it.

We often-see, that ungodly men do offer great wrong unto the children of the Lord. Oh, say prophane beasts & Atheists, these Professors, these Puritanes, they are alwaies heavy and dumpish; there is no comfort, no joy, no true mirth in them, they are always

Use 2.

Rom. 8.1

ways sad and heavy. I tell thee, thou art deceived; they have more sound joy, and true Christian mirth in one hour, than the wicked Atheist of the world hath in a whole year. Yea, who should be merry, if the children and servants of God be not merry? Who can rejoyce more, than he that is the child of God, that feels God's love and favour in his soul, is a member of Jesus Christ, and to whom there is no fear of condemnation?

It is true indeed, in regard of our sins and offences, we have cause to mourn and lament, yet, to weep, if it were possible, tears of blood: But, in regard of God's mercy, in that we be reconciled to God, delivered from Death, Hell, and Damnation, by the Death and Merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, in whom we believe, we can be merry, yet, rejoyce in all estates, in sickness, as well as in health; in poverty, as plenty; in prison, as in liberty. Look on *Peter* in prison, *Paul* in the stocks. Whereas wicked men have onely a carnall and worldly joy in their friends, riches, honours, pleasures,

Parts of
the verse

unto God for the pardon of his sins, as one wonderfully amazed and cast down, in the sense and feeling of God's anger for his sins.

And the request hath two parts: First, Because he had provoked the Lord to anger, and was in danger of his displeasure, he entreats him to turn away his angry countenance from beholding his sins. As if he should have said, Oh Lord, I have committed great and grievous sins in thy sight, and given thee cause to be angry with me. But, Lord, I beseech thee cast away my sins out of thy sight, look not on them, neither call them to account, but put them all out of thy mind.

Secondly, He entreats the Lord to blot them out of his book of remembrance; alluding to them that keep a book of debt, who write all down that is owing unto them, and in token all is discharged, blot and crosse the book: So he requests the Lord to crosse the book of debt, because he was not able to pay the debt; therefore he requireth, that he would in
the

the blood of the promised Messias, be content to blot the book of his account.

When as *David* prayes to God that he would turn away his face, that is, that he would not call his sinnes to mind to punish them, but forget and forgive them, and as it were cast them behind his back, as men use to doe with things they will not remember; Hence we may learn, that there is nothing so fearfull unto us poor distressed sinners, as is the terrible anger, and frowning countenance of the most righteous God, which if a man beholderh, and seeth the Lord to frown upon him, it is impossible, that all the creatures in Heaven and Earth should give him any comfort: No *David* a King, being in danger of his just anger for sin, could have no joy nor comfort until he was reconciled unto God, and d'd behold his loving countenance turned towards him, in and by the means of *Jesus Christ*, and through a lively faith.

And no marvell, though the Prophet intreated the Lord to turn away his

Dolt. 1.
Gods anger most
fearfull
to the
godly.

1 Cor.
16. 5.
Ps. 5. 5.
Ps. 43. 7

his angry face ; for the anger of God is most terrible, yea, more heavy than if a Millstone, yea, Heaven and Earth should be hid upon a mans soul: for as **Rom. 8.3** S. Paul saith, *If God be with us, who can be against us?* so if he be against us who can be with us ? **Heb. 10.** *It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands.* And if the wrath of the King be as the roaring of a Lyon, how much more is the wrath of God to be feared, who can cast both body and soul into Hell ?

Yea, so long as the children of the Almighty enjoy his favour, see his loving countenance, they are able to endure much, though men torment them, persecute them, raile on them: they can endure much misery : but once they lose the feeling of God's love, and see his angry face, and frowning countenance turned towards them ; Oh, then nothing can comfort them till they obtain his favour again. **Iob 13.** How many things did *Job* suffer without impatiency, yea, the losse of all he had ; so long as he felt the loving favour of God towards him : but when he seeth the Lord to arme him-

self like an enemy, and like an angry God, then he was no longer able to endure; and what can be more terrible to a poor sinner, than to wrestle with the anger of God; than which, nothing is more fearfull? And this can every child of God testifie in his own conscience by experience, feeling the heavy weight of the Lord's anger.

Psa. 6. 15

Seeing it is so fearfull a thing for man to provoke the Lord to wrath, and behold his angry and frowning countenance: This condemns the blockishnesse and senselesse security in most folke, who though they doe nothing but sin against God daily, and so provoke him to anger & wrath against them, yet do not so much as say, *Alas, what have I done?* though they lye smoaking under the heavy wrath of God, to be destroyed for their sins. Men fear the wrath and terrible face of great men, especially their Prince; but hard-hearted transgressors fear not the wrath of the eternall God. Well, let all rebellious and stiff-necked men remember what Christ saith, *Fear not him that can kill*

Use 1.

Ver. 36.

the body, & can do no more: but I will tell you whom you shall fear, fear him that can kil both body and soul, & can cast them both into hell fire: fear him.

Use 2.

Isa. 49. 2.

Because nothing moves the Lord to anger, and to be displeased with men and women, but sin; therefore let us above all things shun sin, nor dare to rebell against God, and provoke his wrath. *Your sins have made a separation.* Oh then, take heed of sin. And if thou wilt offend, be sure thou shalt find and feel the wrath of God: and if thou wouldest escape the wrath which is so terrible, take heed of sin, and especially if thou hast sinned, not to lye and continue in sin. It is this which makes God angry, because we do not repent for sin. We see men be too carefull, to shun such things as offend great persons, and procure their displeasure; for fear if they take occasion against them, they turn them out of their Farms, rack their Rents &c. Oh then, fear to offend God, who will reject and cast thee off for ever, and entereise thy judgment.

Use 3.

If we have sinned, and thereby provoked

voked the Lord to anger by our sins, as *David* did, and feel his displeasure, and see his frowning countenance: Oh then let us give no rest unto our souls, till we be reconciled unto him, till we obtain mercy and favour at his hands: For so long as we see his anger and his frowning countenance, alas, we can have no peace nor comfort in the World. If a man should have the favour of all men, great and small, Nobles, Lords, &c. yet if the King hate him, and cannot abide to hear of him, what can all this do him good? so if a man had the favour of all men and Angels; yet, if it were possible, all the things on earth should seek to uphold a man, yet if God be angry, and displeased with him, his wrath would crush him in pieces. Well then, when we trespass against God, and so provoke him to anger, let us use all means to obtain his favour; let us repent of our sins, be humbled for them, acknowledge and confesse them, let us pray for pardon, and intreat the Lord to turn away his face and angry countenance.

Sam. 22.
4.

And as we see, if a man offend a great person, he will ride and run night and day, send gifts, make friends, and all to obtain his favour again; even so must we seek for the favour of God. And as *Abso'on*, having sinned against his Father, sent *Joab* and the woman of *Tekoah* to get his pardon, and to appease his Fathers anger: So we must seek to Jesus Christ, to be our mediator to turn his Fathers anger from us.

Use 4.

Lastly, seeing the anger of God is so fearfull a thing, and so unsupportable, and the loving favour of God is life it self, Oh then let us make much of Gods loving countenance, and do nothing in word or deed that may turn his mercy and loving favour from us, but use all good means possible to continue the same; for if we love him, he will love us: if we honour him, he will honour us. It must be true obedience that we honour God with, for he is the searcher and tryer of all hearts, whether they be right or no; God trieth our hearts, that is our love; he trieth our reins, that

that is our sincerity. God knows our words and thoughts long before we utter them, he knoweth the words of our bed-chamber, which a learned Divine calls twinkling words; though but a whisper; therefore *David* humbly desires that the Lord would hide his face from beholding his iniquity.

Hide thy face from my sins.

THAT is, pardon them, and do not call me to account, to punish me for them. *Moses* saith, *Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, and our secret sins in the sight of thy countenance:* That is, the Lord beheld their sins, that so he might punish them for the same. So when the Lord hideth his face from our sins, it is all one as to pardon them. Now sin is contrary to the essence of God, and if we sin, then follows punishment; for sin & punishment are unseparable companions, Sin is an averting of the heart from the Creator; remove sin, which is the cause of punishment, & the effect will cease. A little leaven doth leaven the whole lump: so one little sin begets another, and one petty sin destroyes

Esay 39.
17.

Mic. 7. 19

Doct. 2.

Notch how
God par
dons sins

the Creature. When a man casteth a thing behind his back, or turnes his face from it, it is a signe he would forget it, and not remember it: Even so when the Lord hideth his face from our sins, it is all one as to pardon them as I said before. Again, *I will put away your sins, and scatter them as a mist*, saith the Lord: & we know that mists that appear a little time, are by and by scattered and gone. *Hezekiah* confesseth, *that God did cast all his sins behind his back*: alluding to men, who when they purpose to forget, or not to remember a thing, turn their backs upon it. Again, *I will cast all their sins in the bottom of the Sea*, alluding to *Pharaoh*, that wicked man, whom God drowned in the bottom of the Red Sea. And thus we have the interpretation of the words.

Here we see now, and after what manner the Lord pardons our sins; namely, when he doth forgive and forget them, and turn his face from them, hath no purpose to remember them, or to punish us for them; and in a word, when he doth upon our true

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repentance, for the Merits of Christ, esteem sin as no sin, as though it had never been committed, when he covers them, and imputeth them not unto us. Indeed, every sin that we commit is a falling from God, and a falling from grace.

Ps. 32.22.

1st I.

Seeing the Lord forgiveth sin after this manner, and even doth in mercy forgive and forget our sins, puts them out of his remembrance, casts them behind his back, and will never call them to mind any more: Here is matter of joy, and endlesse comfort to distressed souls; if thou hast once repented of thy sins truly, and been assured of God for the pardon of them; though thou must remember them, and thy conscience accuse thee for them, as *Job* and *David*, who were troubled for the sins of their youth: Yet, I say, thou shouldest remember them. God will never remember them any more to judgment or condemnation, nor plague nor punish thee for them: He casts them out of his mind, and turns his face from them; and therefore if he once

Rom. 11.
29.

Use 2.

pardon sin, he pardoned it for ever, *for the decree and counsell of God is unchangeable*, he alters not; and therefore if once he gives pardon for sin, he never revokes it, but loves to the end; *the gifts of God are without repentance.*

Seeing the Lord in pardoning of sins, doth turn his face from them, forgets them, and forgives them, and will never speak of them, nor call them to mind any more: We learn hence, in pardoning of wrongs & injuries done to us, to imitate the example of God our heavenly Father, to pardon them, so as we never call them to mind again; that we forgive and forget all wrongs and injuries, trample them under our feet. But it is a common speech of many ungodly men and women, if they do them any harm or injury, they will forgive them, but they will never forget them; and accordingly so they deal, though for a time they can shew a smooth countenance, and give fair words, yet if ever they get them in their danger, they will fetch them over, they will shew their spleen and

ma-

malice, and powre out all their poyson. But let such take heed, for how can they say, *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, and yet do not forgive and forget wrongs? If the Lord should deal thus with us, he should confound us: For God is provoked by us every moment, and we are indebted unto him ten thousand Talents, yet he is intreated of us, and he is reconciled unto us; ought not we therefore to forgive one another after his example? This is the reason used by the Apostle Paul, Col. 3. 12, 13. *Now therefore as the Elect of God, holy and beloved, put on the bowels of mercy, kindnesse, humblenesse of mind, meeknesse, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel to another, even as Christ forgave, even so do ye.* It were woful with us, if God were not ready to forgive. for we find our selves ready to offend. and one sin unpardoned is sufficient to make us condemned. The second branch of the Petition is in the end of the verse, in these words immediately following.

i.
Part of
the verse.

And blot out all mine iniquities, &c.
That is, blot them out of thy Book of accounts, and that Bill & Debt-book wherein they seem to be written or ingraven, for so much doth the speech import: the Prophet alluding to men that keep Books of accounts, wherein they write all their Debts: Even so the Lord hath as it were his Book of accounts, wherein are Registered all the sins of men and women, when and where, and howsoever committed.

Doct. 3.
All our
sins are
known to
God.

Rev. 20.

Then hence we learn, that all our sins are known to God, he hath them all (as it were) written down in a Book of Account, and unlesse they be blotted out in this life, they shall one day be called over, even at the day of judgment, *The Book shall be opened, & every mans conscience shall be as a bill of Indirement to accuse and condemn him.* This is that which is told by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, ch. 16. *The sin of Judah is written with the pen of Iron, & the point of a Diamond.* And *Job* hath it, *Thou hast sealed up our sins in a bag.* By all which places it appears,

search, that all our sins are known to God as perfectly, as if they were noted in a Book, and unless we repent, they shall one day be called over, and laid to our charge, when our book shall be opened.

Seeing that all our sins are well known to God, and the Lord hath them all (as it were) written down in a Book, and this Book shall one day be opened; and if our sins be not blot-
Use 1.
ted out before death come, and this debt be not cancelled; then they shall be brought to light, and we shall be cast into prison till we have paid the uttermost farthing. Then we see, it stands us all in hand while we live, to labour to have this Book cancelled, that our sins may be put out, and all debts crossed. For if they be found uncanceled at death, and at the day of Judgment; if they be found then upon Record, surely then it is too late to look for mercy, or cry, *Lord, Lord, open unto us.* And therefore it is a matter of endless moment, which we are all most carefully to think upon, that this Book may be crossed

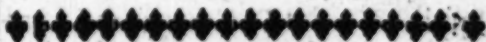
ed, and our sins cancelled; so that we be not in the great day of the generall Judgment called to an account for them.

But how might we do, that we might have our offence blotted out? We are not able to pay the Debt, we owe unto the Lord ten thousand Talents, and cannot pay one penny: what shall we do to have the whole sum paid?

To this I answer, the Lord is like a mercifull Creditour, if his Debtor be not able to pay, let him confess the debt, and he will ask him no more, but will willingly and freely pardon all. So the Lord God, seeing that we are by no means able of our selves to pay the debt, yet if we confess it, and desire pardon, he will forgive it. And yet because he is just, as he is mercifull, therefore we must needs look for this; that his justice should be satisfied; and that is done by the means of his Sonne Jesus Christ, he is become our Surety; he is content to take our debt on him, to become pay-master; and so, when

nothing else could do it, he was content to suffer death, even the cursed death of the Cross, and to wash away our sins by his own heart blood.

So then, we see the means, how our sins are blotted out: Namely, when we do repent of them, bewaile them, be humbled for them, leave and forsake them; lay hold on Jesus Christ, and apply unto us his Death & Passion. Then, by the Blood of Christ, all our sins shall be washed away.



VERSE X.

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.*

David having hitherto craved at the hands of God pardon of his finnes, doth here put up a new Petition to God; namely, for Regeneration, or the new birth. That God would cast him in a new mould, and make him a new man. And that God would in mercy go forwards with the blessed work of Sanctification; begun by his

David's
new Pe-
tition.

his Spirit, and now is interrupted by his sin.

Our reconciliation with God stands in two parts; namely, pardon of sin, and Regeneration. And *David* having in the former Verse prayed for grace and mercy, that God would have mercy upon him, pardon his sins, and wash them all away in the blood of his Son. Now he doth beg for Regeneration, and increase of the blessed work of Sanctification, which is begun and continued by the holy Spirit of God. For though the Lord shall pardon sins past, yet if he gives not power against sinne for time to come, we shall murre all quickly, and commit either the same again, or else some greater sin. Therefore he craves power against sin in time to come, that he may not fall into the like again.

Parts of
this verse

In the tenth Verse, there be two things to be considered. First, he craveth a sanctified heart, because till the heart be pure, no good motion can proceed from thence, no more than sweet water from a bitter fountain:

tain: Secondly, he prays for the renewing of the work of grace, or new birth, and sanctification, which he had by his sins hindred, yea, greatly interrupted: that so his soul and filthy heart being renewed and sanctified, thence might proceed good affections, and holy actions, with continuall and constant obedience.

Whereas the Prophet joynes this Petition of Sanctification unto the former of Justification, we learn that these two graces of God's Spirit, Justification, pardon of sin, and Sanctification, a godly life and conversation, are so knit and united together, that they cannot be separated; so as no man is truly justified by Faith in the blood of Christ, but he is also sanctified by the holy Ghost. No man can have the pardon of his sin, but he must become a new creature in Jesus Christ. And this appeareth very plain by St. Paul, *Rom. 5* (treating of Justification) *ch. 6. v. 4.* 5. entreating of Sanctification, he shews that these two go ever together, so he as he that is not sanctified, is

not

Dott. I.
Justification and
sanctification go
together.

not justified; and he that is not regenerate and born anew by Faith in Christ Jesus, and the work of the Spirit, cannot have remission of his sins.

Use 1.

Seeing justification and pardon of our sins, and sanctification and newnesse of life cannot be severed in the children of God, no more than fire and heat; then man had need to take heed least they deceive themselves while they say, *God is mercifull, and they hope all their sins are pardoned in the blood of Christ.* But unlesse thou be truly sanctified, unlesse thou be a new creature in Christ Jesus, thou canst have no assurance of the justification and pardon of thy sins; and therefore if thou live in sin, delight in sin, have no change, no new birth, no reformation of thy heart, certainly thou hast no remission of thy sins as yet, and thy hope is but a foolish and a vain fancy of thine own heart.

Use 2.

Hence we learn to try the assurance of our Salvation by the fruit of our **Sanctification**: For hereby we may assure our selves that we are justified,
it

if we lead a sanctified life. If we have our conversation in holiness, we shall then have in the end everlasting life.

2 Tim. 2. 19. The Apostle sheweth there, that the foundation of the Lord stands sure, so that the Lord knoweth who are his. He sheweth also, how we shall know, that we are the Lords, even by this, Every one for his own assurance must depart from iniquity; and is confirmed by that of St. John, 1 Joh. 1. 6, 7. *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.* Oh then, as we glory in the name of Christians, & would be accounted Christ's, let us be carefull to bring forth the fruits of Christians, and to lead a sanctified life; for God hath joyned these two together, so that not all the wit and policy of man whatsoever, is able to separate them.

Create in me a clean heart.

TO Create, is to make a thing of nothing, as God created the world; that is, he made all things of nothing. Hence then learn, That it is as great a work to create a new heart

Gen. 1. 1.
Doct. 7.
Repentance is
a new
creature.

heart, and so to save a sinner as to create the whole world of nothing; yea, in some respects, it seems harder. For in the creation of the world, the Lord but spake the word, and all was made, there was no hinderance, no resistance or opposition; but in the creation of the heart anew, there are many lets and hinderances.

First, within a man; every man is an enemy to his own salvation, and the flesh resists this same work. Again, the Devill doth labour to hinder by all meanes possibly, so great a work.

Yet, and besides that, it is a great work to create in a man a new heart. It is also a work of great difficulty, not accomplished without great labour and pain; and therefore it is called a Birth, a Death, a Circumcision. So then, even as no Birth, no Death, no cutting off of the flesh, can be, without pain and sorrow; so the conversion of a sinner is not wrought without pain and sorrow. The Infant is not delivered out of its mother's womb without pain; and dost thou think

think (O man) to part with sinne which is in thee, was conceived with thee, and which since thy birth-day, unto this present, thou hast nourished with such delight, and not to taste of pain in the new birth? No assuredly, it will not be, but it will cost thee much sorrow, many a sigh, yea, and teares themselves, before thou hast the same wrought effectually in thee.

Seeing it is so hard a thing to have a new and sanctified heart, even as to create the whole world, then we had need to take the greater pains about it, to use all means that God hath appointed: Namely, the word preached, the Sacraments, Prayer, Meditation in the Law of God. and to cry unto God for the same continually.

We see that there is nothing in man of himself that is pleasing unto God; for *David* prayes to have a new heart created in him; and therefore there is no Will nor Motion in any man of himselfe to please God, all must be new, yea, till the hearts created anew, and sanctified, it is a sinke of sin, and all uncleannesse, full of

poor-

Use 1.

Ioh. 17.

17.

Act: 15.9

Use 2.

poysoned lusts and concupiscence, and therefore no freedome or will to any thing that is good, till God create this new heart.

Use 3.

Seeing *David* prayeth to God to create a clean heart within him, it must admonish us all to look unto our hearts that they be clean; for it is the Fountain of all Life and Motion. Now such as the Fountain is, such will the water be; such as the Root is, such will the fruit be; and if thy heart be evill, it will send forth filthy lusts and desires. And as our Saviour saith, *Out of the heart commeth evill thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, false testimonies, flanders: these are the things which defile the man.*

*Mat. 15.
29.*

Luk. 8.

Oh then let us look unto our hearts, and labour for sanctified hearts, in-treat the Lord to create them in us, and to take away our stony and corrupt hearts, and to give us good and honest hearts, sanctified by his Spirit, for look how our hearts be, so will our thoughts, words, and works be; A good heart will have good words and good deeds; but a stinking and cor-

corrupt heart will send forth vile and filthy words and works.

Quest. Doth *David* desire no more at all but a clean heart ? hath he no care of his words and of his actions, of his outward life and conversation ?

Ans. Yes verily, *David*, though he names but the heart, yet understands the whole man both outward and inward, but because that is the Fountain of all; therefore he names that; and if the heart be pure, it will make the whole man good; For the heart of a man is like the great wheele of a Clock, it is the first mover either to good or ill.

Hence mark, that in true sanctification, where the work is truly wrought, it is not onely outward in word and deed: but it is inward, and of the whole man: both body and soul, heart, will, judgement, affection, conscience, words, and works. *The God of peace sanctifie you throughout:* So that the mind, which by nature is full of blindness and ignorance, is enlightned by the true knowledge of God, revealed in his Word, the will

Object.

Ans.

Doct. 3.
True sanctification is never in part.

1 Thes. 5. 23.

Rom. 6.
10.

will flyeth evill, and imbraceth that is good, the affections are purged from Rebellion: yea, every part and faculty both of body and soul is sanctified; So ~~that as we have given up our members servants to unrighteousness,~~ *to work sin: now they become servants of righteousness to holiness:* Yea, the body is now a fit Temple of the Holy Ghost, fit to perform all duties to Gods glory, and the edifying of our brethren. And therefore this must be remembered, that he which is truly sanctified, is wholly sanctified throughout in soul and body.

Use 1.

Mar. 6. 2.
Nott this
well,

This shewes how thousands in the world be in a miserable case: for (as) they seem to be religious, and yet are not truly sanctified, for they live in some sin or other: with *Herod* they cherish and nourish in their bowels many sinfull and rebellious lusts and desires. Well, if thy tongue be not sanctified to cease from ill words, and to speak well: if thy hands, or eyes, or eares, &c. if thou be not sanctified throughout in every part, there is no true work of Grace,

no sound sanctification ; for where it hath true operation or working, there will be a change in all parts and powers of the soul and body.

1am. i.

Let us labour to be assured of this blessed work of Sanctification, in that we perceive our selves purged throughout our Minds, Will, Affection, Reason, Conscience ; our Tongue, Hands, Feet, that we deny any service to sin and Satan, and do willingly consecrate all to God. For if we keep one part, and neglect another, it will profit no more than to set a strong defence at one part of a Castle, and neglect the rest; or to shut one gate, and let the rest stand wide open.

2/c 2.

Now that we may the better discern our estate, whether the sound work of grace be wrought in us, or no, and whether God hath sanctified our hearts truly, or no, we shall know it by these three fruits of Sanctification, which are ever found in all them that be truly sanctified.

Notes to know, whether this change is wrought in us or no.

First, a detestation and earnest loathing of our former sins, in which we

I.

Rom. 7.
23.

we have delighted and taken pleasure in, with a hearty love of Righteousnesse and Holinesse, and newnesse of life. So as we are loath to offend God in any thing, and are most carefull to please him in all things; when as we carry a purpose not to sin, but can say, *I delight in the Law of God in the inward man*, though we fall by the infirmity of our own flesh.

2.

Secondly, When we find in our selves, that from this love of that is good, and hatred of evill, we find an earnest desire in our hearts to embrace the one, and to flye the other; so that from this desire there arises a settled purpose in heart, and a carefull endeavour in life, to mortifie our corrupt nature, to subdue the flesh, & in time to come, to frame our lives in all things, according to the rule of God's holy Word. And that we not onely desire this, but use all the blessed means, as the Word, Sacrament, Prayer, and Meditation, to perform it.

Thirdly, Another fruit is this: namely, when as we find in us this desire (to do well, and purpose, and heartily

heartily endeavour to kill sin, and to live to God) 'tis hindred by our spirituall enemies, the devill, world, and the flesh, that then we find a grief of heart, a spirituall combat between the flesh and the spirit, whereby we strive and struggle to prevail against our spirituall enemies, and to overcome them: Then there is wonderfull peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Well then, let all men try themselves, whether God hath by his spirit truly wrought the work of sanctification or not. First, dost thou hate thy former sins, and loath them as bane and poyson; yea, as the Devill himself? and doth thy heart love heavenly Duties, holy and righteous, which before thou foundest bitter? Secondly, dost thou desire and endeavour to kill thy corruptions, to subdue and mortifie thy lusts and desires? and dost endeavour to frame thy life according to the rule of God's holy Word, and makest this thy onely guide? Thirdly, dost thou grieve at thy faults and infirmities,

Q shun

thunneſt the occasions of ſin, and doſt
wreſtle againſt all the temptations of
Satan? and doſt rejoyce in nothing
more, than to prevail and get the vi-
ctory? Theſe be good ſignes and fruites
of Sanctification; but, be they want-
ing, thou canſt not be aſſured thou art
truly ſanctified, or haſt any true work
of grace as yet begun in thy heart.
A ſinners conversion muſt be true
and firm, not for a little or ſmall
ſpace, but daily and hourly. Our acti-
ons of repentance muſt be renewed
continually. *Naaman* muſt waſh ſe-
ven times in *Jordan*, before he can
be clean. We every minute ſin, and
therefore the greater need we have to
repent, and weep as often. God re-
quires an univerſall reformation. The
repentance is happy, when it hath
been as large as our tranſgreſſions.

For Ex-
hortation

Our heart, that little member, muſt
be waſhed and purged from murders,
thefts, and adulteries. *Pilate*, he uſed
an outward and a diſſembling kind of
waſhing, when his heart condemned
Chriſt: but let us waſh our eyes from
luſts & deſires of the fleſh, our tongues
from

from unclean speeches ; our heads from plots of device ; our hearts from pride and envy : All sins are spots and blemishes. no sin must be left unwashed : We wash daily , but we do not wash all , we must wash our affections daily, and then we wash as we ought. We must give the Lord present obedience : Let us not venture to sleep till we have washed and cleansed our hearts, and cast up our reckonings with God , for the day past , for the most righteous man that liveth , sinneth seven times a day: and therefore ought not we to take an account of our actions and words in the day, as well as we cast up our takings in the shop-book , what we have sold and got in the day ? O let us by all means take heed , in not having our hearts here with *David* purged and washed , lest snatched away by death on a sudden, like *Herod* and like *Zimri* and *Cashy*, we be killed in the very act of our sins. Therefore let us desire the Lord to prosper our intentions , that we may daily wash our selves with true Repentance : saying with *David*,

Create in me O Lord a new heart,
O GOD.

Doct. 4.
God the
Author
of Sancti-
fication.
1 Thes. 5.
23.
Joh. 1. 13

Hence we learn, who is the Au-
thor of this work of Sanctifica-
tion: namely, it is the proper work
of the third Person in Trinity, the
holy Ghost; he doth sanctifie the E-
lect: *The very God of peace sanctifie*
you throughout. The faithfull are be-
gotten. *Not of flesh and blood, nor of*
the will of man, but of God.

This work of Sanctification cannot
flow from our Parents; *For who can*
bring a clean thing out of filthinesse?
the new birth is not of blood, nor of the
Will of the flesh, nor of man, but of
Christ, *who 1 Cor. 1. 30. is made unto*
us sanctification, Col. 1. 19. In him are
hid all the treasures of it, Joh. 3. 16. Of
whose fulnes we receive grace for grace

Ezek. 36
16.

Again, it is said, *A new heart will I*
give them, and a new spirit will I put
into them: And I will take away their
stony hearts, and give them hearts of
flesh: God the Father sanctifieth in gi-
ving his Son Christ unto us; so Christ
sanctifieth, in washing us from our
sins in his blood, and the holy Ghost
in

in applying Christ Jesus his death and Resurrection to us : and thus the work of Regeneration , or Sanctification, is by God wrought alone in the Elect. God created man without his help, but he will not save us without our help ; and the reason is good, because he hath given man the means and ability to step forwards towards salvation ; and that man that doth not go forwards, goes backwards.

Well then, this shews that man hath no freedom of will of heavenly things pertaining to eternall Life, but all is of God ; Faith, Salvation, Life eternall, all comes from God ; and therefore let us use all good means appointed of God , and seek this at his hands, who alone can and will do it.

Now followes the second part of the Verse : *And renew a right spirit within me* : Where *David* craves grace from God to become a new creature ; and withall , that God would enable him by his Spirit to be faithfull , and constant in time to come, and therefore requires of God a stable mind, a firme spirit : that is , not onely a constant

^{2.}
Part of
this verse

purpose to walke uprightly with God, but power and strength from his Spirit to become faithfull and constant, as fearing his own weakness, if the Lord should leave him to himselfe: for as God gives grace to obey, so he must give grace to persevere. As if he should have said: O Lord, thou hast begun this blessed work of Regeneration and New Birth, by thy holy Spirit: But I, like a sinfull wretch, by sin and Rebellion have hindered the same, and broken off the gracious work of thy holy Spirit: Now I beseech thee, O Lord, lay to thy hand again, and afresh begin to renew the work of thy Spirit, even the blessed work of the New Birth; and withall, grant that in time to come, I may be strengthened in the inner man by thy holy Spirit, and may be made thereby firm and constant to continue; yea, to grow and hold out to the end in holy Obedience.

Deut. 5
The sin
of man
breaks off
the work
of Sancti-
fication.

Mark, that *David* acknowledgeth he had broken off the work of God his Spirit in him, and interrupted the same, and hindered the work of Sanctification.

Sanctification by his sins, and disobedience. And therefore we learn, that after God hath touched a man's heart to repent, and sanctified him by his Spirit, if he sin, and rebel against God, he doth what lies in him to cut off the work of grace, and to hinder the work of his salvation, and break off the gracious work of Sanctification, and New-birth; and if the Almighty should leave him, he should fall clean away from grace; for the Spirit of God is glad and joyfull, when as we are carefull to avoid all those waies which offend God, and wound our souls; when we seek to have good hearts, faith unfeigned, and a good conscience; then the Spirit of God doth daily proceed with the work of the New-birth and Sanctification; but after we rebell against God, and commit sin, we grieve the holy Spirit of God, and vex him, that he is compelled by our lewdnesse to leave off the work in the midst, because we suffer not our selves to be wrought upon, but we will follow our own lusts and likeing; & when the Spirit of

Ephes. 4.
30.

God ceaseth to renew us, and to beget our hearts to God, then there rises blindnesse of minde, so as we cannot conceive and feel the love of God, as in *David*: And then this gracious work of the Spirit being interrupted, there arises griefe and sorrow of soul and conscience.

"se 1.

Well, seeing this is the fruit of our sins, against knowledge and conscience, they hinder the work of grace and new birth, and interrupt the blessed work of Sanctification, begun by God's Spirit, and bring blindnesse of mind, and hardnesse of heart: Oh then, let us take heed of sin, entreat the Lord that he would give us grace for ever, to hide his Word in our hearts, that we might not sin against his Majestie, and that he would not leave us to blindnesse of mind, and hardnesse of heart, but that he would rather continue his love and mercy unto us, and that his holy Spirit would daily proceed with the blessed work of sanctification, and renewing of our soules unto Holinesse and Righteousnesse.

So

So often as we be tempted too, let us remember, that if we yield unto it, we shall hinder the blessed work of Gods Spirit, hinder our New birth and sanctification, and thereby do what lies in our power to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and cause him to leave off the happy work of Regeneration.

se 2.

When *David* intreateth the Lord that he would renew a constant and stable spirit in him; he shews that he was greatly affraid of his own weaknesse; and therefore desires strength from God to hold out and persevere in obedience even unto the end; That God would by his Spirit give him a constant purpose and continuall indeavour both in heart and life to do his will; and therefore we learn from him to suspect our selves, to fear our own weaknesse and infirmity, if the Lord should leave us to our selves; *Blessed is the man that fears alwayes; but he that hardneth his heart shall run into all evill wayes.* For such is our weaknesse, that we are ready to fall into the selfesame sin, from the which we are escaped, if the Lord do but a little

se 3.
Good to
hear our
weaknes

Prov. 18.
14.

leave us to our selves: This doth the Prophet teach, *Psal. 78.* *How oft did they provoke him in the Wilderness, & grieve him in the Desart?* Thus did Pharaoh, *Exo. 9. 27.* *I have sinned and the Lord is righteous, but I & my people are sinfull.* But when the judgment was removed, his heart was hardened again, and he continued in his sin: We see this in the example of the Israelites, *Jud. 3.* They commit evil again, and again, they fell into Idolatry, they knew it was a sin, yea, and they had experience of Gods severiey against it: For all that, they fell again into the same sin, and so provoked the Lord to punish them. So *Heb. 6.* *Many sin again after the receiving and acknowledging of the Truth.* So that except the Lord uphold and stay men back, they will fall into the same sin they before committed, and so provoke the Lord afresh to punish them.

Oh then let us fear our weaknesse: if David, a worthy Prophet, a man after Gods heart, prayeth this, *That God would establish him with his free Spirit:* That is, give him a constant purpose

pose and endeavour to continue in obedience, how much more have we need to do the same, knowing how weak we are, how many incitements we have to sin, how cunning the Devil is, and useth the world and the flesh, as so many enemies to fight against us? Well, let us fear the worst, and doubt our weakness: and it will make us more carefull to avoid sin, and the occasions of sin; for seldom shall a man fall into that sin which he doth truly fear to commit.

As we are to fear our own weakness and infirmity, so we must entreat the Lord, that he would never leave us to our selves, but that he would give us his stable and constant Spirit; or, as *Paul* praises for, *That God would strengthen us by his Spirit in the inner man*: that he might not onely begin well, but continue by constant perseverance in obedience all our daies. For if the Lord leave us, alas, we shall easily fall flat to the ground. Even as a staffe in a man's hand, so long as it is steyed, it stands; but if it be left alone, it falls to the ground: So it is with

with us, and therefore let us not presume of our own strength or power, but suspect it, and pray to God to renew his constant & stable Spirit in us.

Is 5.

Here is matter of great comfort to the children of God, that fall of weaknesse and infirmity to the same offence after Repentance: And such is the depth of Satan's temptations, that he tells them, that the children of God fall not into the same sin again after their repentance; if they do, he then telleth them, that there is no place for a second Repentance: But this is false, for the promises of God are without limitation of times, or consideration of sins, or respect of persons. He will receive to his mercy all repentant sinners, whether their sinnes be committed before or after Repentance, whether once or often; so that they renew their Repentance according as they have sinned anew. This pardon Christ himself publisheth, *Matth. 11. Come unto me all ye that are weary, and are heavy laden, & I wil refresh you.* Yea, the Lord enjoineth us sinfull men,
Luk.

Luk, 17. so forgive our brother seventy times seven times, if he turn again & say, It repenteth me. So that we see, this is a marvellous comfort to all such, as groan under the burden of their sins, that have fallen through infirmity into one sin often: Let not such be discouraged, but assure themselves, that albeit with *Peter* they fall often, yet if with him they repent truly, and weep bitterly for their sins, the Lord is mercifull to forgive them their sins. Not that we should live proudly, presumptuously, stubbornly, and obstinately against him; but if we fall through frailty: for, *Psal. 103. The Lord knoweth whereof we be made, he remembereth that we are but dust.*

When *David* prayeth to be renewed, and to recover his former feeling and comfort: Hence we learn, that the child of God is not always at one stay, but there is an intercourse in the faith of a Christian man or woman; somerimes full of comfort, joy, and peace in conscience; and sometimes again heavy and sad, yea, full of sorrow and perplexity: Even as a
man

Doff. 6.

The child of God is not always at one stay.

man in an Ague, sometimes sick, and sometimes well; and as it is with Trees, sometimes Winter, and sometimes Summer. This is the estate of all God's children, as *David, Joseph, Hezekiah, Job, &c.* and continuall experience proveth this, that the estate of all God's children ebbs and flows, hath its change: when as they walk directly and upright with God, then they have peace and comfort; but when they start aside, and commit some sin, then they find torments of conscience, and grief of mind.

Use 1.

This shews us what is the estate and condition of the child of God in this life: He is not here so sanctified, as that he feels no corruption of sin to hang about him; but rather such a one as feels the burthen of his corruptions, hindring him in this his course of Christianity, under which he sighs and groans, labouring by all good means to be disburthened. Indeed it is a matter of great comfort, to feel the graces of God's Spirit, as Faith, Love, &c. but no child of God can alwaies feel the

the comfort of grace, but, as fire that is raked up in the ashes, it is hid from his feeling for a time, but at length it will break out again to his great joy and comfort.

Well, seeing this is the estate of Gods children here, and sometimes they find great peace and comfort, sometimes great grief and sorrow, let us not be too much discouraged, but rather, when as by our falls and slips we have weakened our comfort, let us intreat the Lord to renew our comfort again; let us do as a poor Travailer, if he misse his way, and go out of it, he will hasten into it again, and trudge, and pluck up his heels to recover that he hath lost: so let us when we have sinned, and gone out of the way, make haste to return: and as a man that hath been long sick, being grown feeble and weak, will use all means to gather up his crums, and to recover his former strength again; So let us when we have lost some part of our comfort, and heavenly strength: let us (I say) use all blessed means, to recover our former health and comfort again;

Isa 2.

again ; let us pray much, read much, hear often, and meditate much : let us bewaile us of our former sloth ; and make more upright steps in time to come to Gods Kingdome.

Doct. 2.

A purpose not to sin, the mark of a sanctified heart.

Pf. 50. 17

Mar. 6. 2.

Note hence, That it is the speciall fruit and mark of a sanctified heart, and of the mind renewed, to have a *right spirit* ; that is, a purpose not to sin, but in all things to please God, and to do his Will, to walk with God in all his Commandements. Where is on the contrary, when a man hath a purpose to live in any known sin, it is a fearfull and manifest signe of a naughty and wicked heart : for when the heart is truly sanctified, then will be wrought this right spirit not to transgresse in any thing ; I do not say, that the man sanctified and regenerate doth not sin at all ; but he hath no purpose to sin, no delight in sin, but beareth a constant purpose in all things to please God ; when he can say with *David*, *I have refrained my feet from every evill way* : Again, *that is born of God, sinneth not* ; that is, with all purpose of heart, with de-

Gen. 17.

1.

Pf. 18. 23.

1 Ioh. 3. 9

Gen. 39

9.

light

light in sin : and as they purpose , so they endeavour it, they are afraid, and suspect themselves , shun the occasion of sin, strive against their corruptions , and Sath'n's temptations.

This Doctrine doth evidently convince the greatest number, to be such as never had the true work of sanctification wrought in them : Their hearts be not sanctified , their minds be not renewed : Why? namely, because they want this mark and fruit of a sanctified heart : For though they hear of their sins , be told of them , and the fearfull judgments of God denounced against them , yet they will not leave them , neither forsake them , but will continue in them , yea, though it cost them the losse of God's favour , and endangering their own souls. Let us not deceive our selves , let us try our hearts by this rule, whether they be sanctified or no : Dost thou find a dislike of all sins , and an hatred of them ? hast thou a constant and resolute purpose , by the grace of God, to walk before him all thy daies ? This is a signe of

Use 1.

an

an upright heart, and that it is sanctified. And dost thou find no such resolution, no such purpose, but rather contrary, in a wilfull manner, so run on in thy old sins? thou wilt continue in them, let God and men say, and do what they can, in lying, stealing, drunkenness, whoredom, ignorance, contempt of the Word, &c. Say what thou wilt, confesse what thou wilt, it is a clear case, thy heart is naught, it is filthy, not sanctified; for it is impossible that a man should have true repentance, and a heart truly sanctified, and yet have a purpose to live in his known sins. And therefore it convinceth all such as be impenitent, wilfull, and notorious hypocrites and sinners. Yea, if they forsake many of their sins, and yet purpose to live in one, it argueth the heart is not sanctified: *Herod* left many, yet lived in covetousness, and the like.

Mar. 6.
Mar. 28.

This Doctrine may serve for the comfort of God's children, who are much grieved for their sins and infirmities, when they fail and come short of good duties, and sometimes start
aside.

side, as saith Saint James, *In many things we sin all: and the just man falls seven times.* But if thou canst truly say, it is against my purpose, I hate the sinne I commit; I condemn it, I had no purpose to do it, my desire was to please God, then thou maist have comfort, thy heart is sound, God will not condemne thee for it: *The Lord will spare his children as a Father his only Son.* A child is going to school, and his purpose is so to do, in the way he falls into some company, and staves there too long, and plaies the trewant, but it is against his purpose: Even so the child of God purposeth to serve God, and to please him in all things, having no purpose to sin, but by some temptation of the Devill, or allurement of the World, is overtaken, *I doe the evill I would not, I cannot doe the good I would, but I delight in the Law of God, concerning the inner man:* this is Pauls comfort, and this is the comfort of all Gods children, if they can truly say, I do the evill I would not, I delight in the Law of God, that God will accept the will for the deed.

Re-

Renew, or refresh a new spirit in me.

AS if he should have said, O Lord, I have (by my sins) dimmed thy graces in me; yea, even quenched, and extinguished them, and almost put them clean out; but Lord I beseech thee, renew thy graces in me, *Refresh me*: Even as we see a Lamp when all the oyle is spent, it winks, and is almost extinguished, till it be renewed and refreshed with oyle, then it burns again, and giveth light.

Doct. 8.

Sinne
quenche
grace as
water
doth fire.

Hence we learn, what is the cursed nature of sin, and the great power of it: Namely, it is a pail of water cast on the fire, which if it do not quench and exstinguish, and put all out, yet it allayes the heat of it: Even so the graces of Gods spirit in his children, alas, they be but weak and small; but sinne is a pail of cold water, to quench the heat and comfort of them. *David* was wont to delight in Gods service, to be forward thereunto; but sin did so cool him, that he could have little joy in it now: *Demas* was forward a while, but the World

choked

choaked him so, that he left Christ; and Christ bids the Church of *Sardin* to be awake, and to strengthen the things that are ready to die in them: and the *Laudiceans* grew neither hot nor cold, by reason of their pride and carnall security. So is the Church of *Ephesus* reprov'd, for that she had lost her first love; So the *Apostle St. James* resembleneth and compareth sin to Child bearing for the fruitfulness of it: *Iam. 1. 15.* *Lust when it hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, it bringeth forth death, 1 Cor. 5. 6.* Likewise it is compared to leaven, that leaveneth the whole lump, and therefore no marvail though it proceed by little and little, from one degree unto another.

Rev. 3. 2.

Rev. 2.

When we see some men, who have been forward, and have taken delight in good things, now grow cold, and lose their first love, it is a flat signe that some sinne or other hath stolne upon them; they either fall in love with the World, delight, pleasures, profits, preferments, or else security possesseth their soul, as pride, idleness.

Vse 1.

ness, sloath, selfe-love, covetousnesse, pleasure, some sin or other hath bewitched them; and therefore let all such as find themselves thus decaying in grace, faith, comfort, care and conscience; let them suspect themselves, and think all is not well; let them search the cause of their decay, and it is sin, some sin or other hath crept upon them.

Use 2. How should this make us afraid of sin, seeing it hath such wofull effect? which is to quench the comfort and graces of Gods holy Spirit in us: it blinds our eyes, that we cannot see what is good and evil, it hardeneth the heart, that a man cannot relent and mourn for his sins, and be moved with the Almightyes Judgements, it bringeth decay and eclips of his graces: men are afraid to do any thing that might hinder their health, or wealth, how much more the health and happiness of their souls? Let us therefore alwayes keep a diligent care over our souls, let us seek to cut off all occasions to evill, and endeavour to stop the first beginning: for the more sinne groweth

groweth unto an head, the more the Spirit of God is quenched, the work of grace is diminished, & the assurance of our comfort is weakn'd & lessen'd.

Use 3.

When we find any decay in Faith, Love, Zeal, Knowledge, Repentance, Obedience, &c. Oh then, let us labour to be renewed, to recover our former estate again. *Do thy first works again.*

Rev. 1.1.

Awake and strengthen the things ready to die. Stir up, even as a sparkle of fire in ashes blown up; so must we use all means, whereby we may have the work of grace renewed in us.

2 Tim. 1.

5.

1. We must attend upon the Word of God preached; for as that is the means to beget faith, so it is to encrease it and renew it.

The means for encreasing of grace.

2. We must read and meditate much, call our minds to account, and be sorry for our decays, and labour to repair them; even as a ship, when it leaks, or a City, when the Walls be battered.

3. We must (saith David) pray often and earnestly unto God, to renew a right spirit in us, and a godly spirit, that may be alwaies bent to the glo-

ry of God, and our own salvation.

The spirit of adultery may dwell in us, as in *David*; the spirit of uncleanness and incest may have possession of us, as in *Lot*; the spirit of denial of our Master may have place in us, as in *Peter*; the spirit of cruelty and persecution may rage in us, as in *Paul*; but not to have so much rule and predominance in us, as to keep out the grace of God: for we may plainly see, that as soon as God hath given them the right spirit of discerning, and the true spirit of knowledge of their sins, they repented presently, and became children of obedience, and worthy instruments of God's glory. True it is, man may fall and sinne, through weaknesse and frailty of his own corrupt nature; and yet recover again, by God's speciall favour and grace. But if he recover again, and then fall to sinning anew; it cannot be lesse than presumption; for that man which is twice a sinner, and but once a penitent, we may say, hath sins as red as Scarlet, and yet by true repentance and amendment of his life,

may be made as white as snow , O my beloved , when God shall bring us to the pit or brinke of death ; O then shall we easily see, that sinne and the pleasure which we have taken in following and delighting in it shall then prove a heavy burthen to us, which will so load our poor consciences , that we shall be ready to sink under the weight of it , if Gods mercy be not shown in our weakness. Will any man drink poyson because he will try an Antidote ? commit sinne , and then presume of Gods mercies ? God forbid ! But let us so lead our lives here on earth , that we may in the end of our dayes , enjoy heaven for our reward : there is the blessed Consummation of all them who love the Lord Jesus.



VERSE XI.

*Cast me not away from thy presence,
and take not thy holy spirit from me.*

David in the former Verse,
had put up sundry Requests and Petitions to
R God

The divi-
sion of
the
words,

God for grace and mercy for the pardon of his sins.

Now this eleventh Verse containeth in it an earnest Deprecation; Wherein the Prophet intreateth the Lord to turn from him two fearfull judgements, and grievous punishments; which he had deserved for his sins. First, what greater misery can befall the child of God, then to be cast out of Gods presence, love, and favour? Secondly, what greater plague to a distressed soul, then to be deprived of Gods blessed Spirit; whereby alone we are guided and comforted, and without whom we can have no comfort, nor ever do any good things but shall be carried of our owne lust, headlong into all sinne and wickednesse?

David
alludeth
to the
judge-
ment of
God up-
on Saul.

Now against both these, *David* prayeth unto the Lord in this Verse, and herein he alludeth to the judgement of God upon *Saul*, who was his next predeceffor and King over *Israel*, whom the Lord cast off, and did utterly reject from being King over the people, because he did reject the
Lord.

Lord , and cast off the Commandement of God , and would not obey his voice : And therefore the Lord took his Spirit from *Saul* , and gave him an evill spirit to vex and torment him. And both these *David* here prayeth against ; that Almighty God would shew him mercy, and not deal with him as he did with *Saul* , though he had transgressed and offended grievously , yet that he would rather humble him by some other means, and not in his just judgment to cast him off, and reject him , nor take his holy Spirit from him. And as God doth bring coals to make his wrath hot, so must man bring tears with Repentance. *David* knew that from God all punishment did come : and our perdition is from our selves, and by us all sin is committed ; and therefore he desires the Lord not to cast him away ; which is my next part to handle.

1 Sam. 11
16.

Cast me not away.

AS if he should have said , O Lord , howsoever I have sinned grievously , yet I pray thee deal not

R 2

with

with me as thou didst deal with *Saul*, that wicked man, to cast me off and reject me for being King and Ruler of thy people : Nor take thy holy Spirit from me, whereby I am enabled to do thy will.

By the presence and face of God, is meant the love and favour of God: and therefore *David* intreateth the Lord, that he would not thrust him clean out of favour, and deprive him of his love. Therefore let every man and woman never defer their repentance, but crave pardon for their offences with *David*, saying, *O Lord, I have sinned against thee*; casting thy selfe down at his mercy Seat, like the Prodigall Son, like another *Mary Magdalen*, like penitent *Peter*, desiring the Lord to have pittie and mercy on thy sinfull soul, not to cast it for ever from his presence; but rather chastise thee as a Son, but not to dis-inherit thee, and cast thee out for a reprobate.

Doct. 1.
The
pleasures
of sin are
learnt
byough.

Hence we learn, that it is a wonderfull and feirfull judgement for a man or woman to be cast out of the Lords favour, from his presence, so
as

so as he shall shew no favour unto us, but his dis-favour and wrathfull countenance, it is a very heavy and dolefull case. It is said of *Cain*, that God cast him out of his presence, and that was the height of *Cain's* misery. So the Lord cast off *Saul* from being King over *Israel*. As the favour of God is life, so his dis-favour is Death and Hell: and as in the presence of God is fulnesse of joy and pleasure for evermore; so in the want of his presence, there is nothing but woe and misery, yet, it is a step to eternall death: neither is there any misery which the child of God doth feare more than this, to be forsaken of the Lord Almighty, and to be cast out of his favour.

Seeing that is so greivous and fearful a judgement to be cast out of the Lord's favour and gracious presence, Oh what mad men be they, that make so light of Gods love and favour, that will for the gaining of a penny or two, or the enjoying of an hours pleasure, lose the love and favour of the Lord Almighty, and for

R

ever

Gen. 4.

Use 1.
Their
madnesse
discove-
red, that
make
light of
Gods fa-
vour.
Mar. 16.
16.

ever deprive themselves of his glorious presence, and plunge both body and soul into everlasting woe and misery, with the Devil and his Angels.

Use 2.

Seeing the enjoying of Gods presence is so happy and comfortable, and to be deprived of it, is so grievous and terrible, how should we use all means to get into his favour, if we want it, and keep it, if we have it? *In thy presence is the fulnesse of joy, and in thy Light we shal see light.* And because sin thrusts men out of Gods presence, and separates between God and man, above all things take heed of sin, avo'd it, and shun it, as the bane of our souls.

For the better opening and understanding of this Verse, we must discuss two great and weighty questions, which being well considered, will make much for the clearing of this Text.

Two objections.

The former is this, when *David* intreats the Lord, *Not to cast him out of his presence*, That is, his love and favour; whether a man elected, and in the favour of God, as *David*, justified and sanctified, may lose the love of God, and

and fall away, to become a reprobate and cast away, and so finally to perish?

The other question is, seeing *David* prayeth the Lord, *Not to take his holy Spirit from him*, whether the sanctified gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit, may finally and totally be extinguished and taken away? these questions both be defended and affirmed by the Papists and their followers, who hold that a man truly elected, called, justified, and sanctified, and in the favour of God, may fall away and perish. We hold the contrary, that a man once in the favour of God, elect, called, justified, and sanctified, cannot finally perish, nor clean be bereft of the saving graces of the Holy Spirit.

Now because these two questions be points of great moment, and on which all our happinesse and comfort doth hang, and only depend, therefore I will stand a little to prove them by the Testimonies of Scripture, with Reasons and Arguments drawn from the written word of God, and remove some certain Objection of the Papists, against the certainty of our

perseverance in Faith to the end.

Jer. 31. 3.

First, that place of *Jeremy*, where the Lord comforts his Elect and chosen people, is most pregnant for this purpose: *Yea, (saith the Lord) with an everlasting love have I loved thee, and therefore in mercy have I drawn thee:*

Ioh. 13. 1.

So that it is manifest hence, whom God loves once in Christ, he loves for ever; and there is no time when he can be said not to love them: *For as much as he loved his owne, that were in the World; unto the end he loved them:*

Rom. 11.

Where our Saviour Christ, to comfort his Disciples, tells them, that God the Father loved them that be members of Jesus Christ, even unto the end, and his love shall never fail them. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* Now then, unlesse

Mat. 24.
24.

a man will say, that God doth repent of his calling and electing men to eternall life, it must needs follow, that they cannot perish, whom God calls and means to save: And our Saviour Christ saith plainly, that it is impossible, that any man elected should perish. False Christs should deceive

the

the very *Elect* if it were possible, but that is impossible: And the gates of Hell, that is, all the power and malice of the Devill, shall not prevail against the least of Gods Children, to hinder heir everlasting Salvation. Ro. 8.30.

Again, this is proved, *Mat. 16.16.* where Christ promiseth *Peter*, and in him the whole Church, *That the gates of Hel should never prevail against him*: Where Christ shews that indeed the Devill through his Temptations might shew very much strength, but they should then comfort themselves in this, that they should never prevail, or finally get the Victory. Again, *Mat. 24.* *They shall deceive (even if it were possible) the very Elect.* Out of which words of our Saviour we may gather, that the *Elect* of God shall not be seduced, and so fall away finally. Again, *Joh. 10.28.* Christ saith *His sheep shall never perish*, adding this withall, *No man shall take them out of my hands.* And again, *Rom. 8.30.* *Whom he predestineth, he calleth, justifieth, sanctifieth, and glorifieth*: Therefore not fall away finally;

for he that falleth away finally, shall (assuredly) never be glorified.

But admit, (as the Papists would have it) that a man might fall away finally, then he must be clean cut off from Christ, and have no conjunction with him, before he fall away finally: Then at the second re-uniting he must be Baptised, for Baptisme is the Sacrament of incision, or of grafting into Christ: But that is absurd, that Baptisme should be any more than once administred; therefore a man is but once united, or once ingrafted, and cannot be re-united, and never fall. And therefore frivolous is that distinction of Veniall and Mortall sinnes with Papists. For if any sinne of the Elect should be mortall, then there must needs be a second renewing of the Elect unto Christ: which is most absurd to think, for the Lord worketh this but once: And *David*, though at this time he lay languishing under the heat of the Lords wrath, for those horrible sinnes of his, Adultery and Murther; yet in this Verse he prayes not to have it taken from

All men
must put
a difference be-
tweene that
they feel
and that
they have

from him, which doth argue that he had a touch of it, even at this time of greatest extremity and misery, though he felt it not with the same measure of comfort he had done many times before.

Secondly, besides all these plaine Testimonies of Scripture, let us consider a word or two to prove, that in regard of God the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the Elect cannot perish, and finally fall away.

First, if a man elected of God to eternall life, called, justified, and sanctified, may fall away, and finally perish, then it is either because God wants love, or power to save him, but to say that God is unwilling, or unable, is meer blasphemy: Therefore all those which he elects must needs be saved, seeing God doth both wil it, and shew that he is able to effect it; first if God be willing, and would save them, *Who hath resisted his Will? If God be with us, who can be against us?* but that he is most willing, and able to save the Elect, it is manifest For his Will, God so loved them, that he sent his Son to dye

Rom. 11.
Rom. 8.

Joh. 3. 16

dye for them. Now this is a great trial and proof of his love and willingness, that he had rather see his onely begotten Son, that was near and dear unto him, to be hanged on the Tree, to dye the cursed death on the crosse, to shed his precious blood, and to bear the curse of God, and hellish torments, than to see any one of the elect, perish: *And this is the Fathers Will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day.*

1oh. 6. 30

Esa. 63.

1ohn 10.

27, 28.

Secondly, for his power, that he is able to save all those whom he will save, it is manifest; God is Omnipotent, and most righteous, and mighty to save, and the Lord doth what he will, *None can take them out of my Fathers hands, who is greater then all.* And therefore seeing God is willing, and desires that all the Elect should be saved, and not only Decreed it, but sent his Son to save them.

Secondly, those for whom Christ died, and prayed that their faith might not fail, they must needs be saved, and their faith cannot fail; but he hath

trav.

prayed for all true believers : *Father keep them that thou hast given me, that they may be one in me, as thou art one in me.* Now then, if Christs prayer be of force, and can prevail, and do any thing with the Father, (as he confesseth) that the Father hath, doth, and will hear him in all things, then certainly no true believer can perish, and finally fall away.

Thirdly, no true member of Christ can perish ; for then Christ's body should be imperfect ; but every true believer is a living member of Christ's body, and therefore cannot perish : yet, it is as impossible that Christ himself should perish, as any true believer that is truly ingrafted into his body by faith and the spirit.

Fourthly, in regard of God the Holy Ghost, who is the pledge and pawn of our Adoption and Salvation, the Seal of our Election, and doth testify Gods love in Christ for our Salvation. Now then, unlesse we will say that the Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of Wisdom, being of the very counsell of God, and the Spirit of truth

Luk. 22.
32.
John 17.

Ro. 8. 16.

1 Joh. 3.9

that cannot lye, that he testifies untruths, that the believer that repents, and believes in Christ Jesus shall be saved, and yet he shall not, which is Blasphemy, we must needs confesse, it is impossible: *He that is born of God cannot sin*, (with full consent to death) *because the seed of the Spirit remaineth in them.* And therefore I conclude, that the child of God, Elected, Called, Justified, and Sanctified, cannot perish, and for ever fall away; cannot become a Reprobate, and limbe of the Devil, but shall continue to the end, & God will finish the good work of grace in him; till the comming of his Son Christ Jesus.

Use 1.
Papists doctrine
against
the nature of
Faith.

This confutes that damnable Doctrine of the Papists, who hold all in uncertainty, yet, they teach and hold that a man truly Elected, may become a reprobate, though to day a child of God, and highly in his favour, yet to morrow by thy sins thou maist become a limbe of the Devill, out of Gods favour, in his displeasure, damned for ever, though to day a member of Christ Jesus, called, justified,

stified, and sanctified, yet to morrow lose all, and be damned for ever, which indeed is the break-neck of all hope and comfort, if a man know not whether he shall be saved or not.

A marvellous comfort to Gods children, if thou diddest ever find the true work of grace in thy heart, true faith, repentance, and newnesse of life, assure thy selfe it cannot ever be lost, God will finish that he begins, yea, the estate of Gods children now, is better than the estate of *Adam* in Paradise before his fall; for then *Adam* stood by his owne power, therefore might, and did fall: *But we be kept by the power of God unto eternall life.* Secondly, the estate of *Adam* was mutable, by reason he had freedom of will, to stand or fall: but the estate of Gods Elect is certain and sure, in regard of Gods eternal decree in Christ, his death and passion, and the bond of the Spirit which cannot be broken.

But there be three Objections against this Doctrine: that faith can never be lost, or an Elect child of God become a Reprobate. First, that

Vse 2.
Comfort
unto
Gods
Children
that grace
cannot be
lost.

1 Pet. 1. 5.
Gal. 2. 2.

Three ob-
jections.

God

God is said to be angry with his Children, and shew them his dis-favour: Secondly, that they by their sins may cut themselves off from Gods favour, and so lose eternall life, and be damned: And thirdly, other testimonies of Scripture, which may seem to prove the same.

Esa. 64. 5. For the former, *Behold, thou art angry, for we have sinned against thee,* so that it seemeth, that a man in the favour of God to die, may fall out of it, and procure his dis-favour, anger, and displeasure.

Ans. First, that God is not angry, to speak properly; with his children, but seemeth so to be by correcting and punishing them by judgements and afflictions; so as a child thinks his Father is angry, because he corrects him: so do Gods Children; an indeed such affections do not agree to Gods nature, to be like an earthly mans.

Secondly, I answer, that this anger of God is not an effect of his displeasure or dis-favour, but rather his love: And he corrects his children, not to de-

destroy them ; but to convert them, that he may save them ; as a Father his Son, whom he loves dearly.

Obj. 2. Where it is said, that Gods Children may by their sinnes break off Gods love, yea, thrust themselves out of favour, and be for ever damned.

2.
Rom. 8.

I Answer, it is false; for they be kept from damnable sins, and God lets their sinnes turn to their good, for God doth ever give them hearts to repent : The sins of the godly in themselves, deserve the everlasting curse of God, and eternall death ; If so that Jesus Christ had not by his death and blood-shedding satisfied his Fathers anger for them.

Object. 3. David prays that God would blot them out of the Book of life ; therefore it seems a man Elected may perish and be damned, for that Book is meant Gods Counsell.

3.
Psal. 69.
83.

I Ans. That *David* doth not read that ever the wicked had their names written indeed in the Book of life, or were elected indeed ; but onely because they lived in this Church, were taken for Christians, and esteemed as

writ-

written in the Book of Life, and therefore he prays the Lord to blot them out. That is, to make it known, that they were never written in it.

Well then, certain it is, that no one Elect Child of God can perish or be damned, but shall come to life eternal, and be saved, because the Counsell of God standeth sure, and cannot be altered.

Instruct. Seeing this is so, that none that is the elect child of God, can perish, what a sweet comfort is this to all the children of God? For if ever thou didst repent, and feltest the love of God truly in thy soul, and art justified, and sanctified, thou needst not fear, for surely thou shalt be saved. And this must be a sure stay to uphold our poor souls in all dangers and temptations. We are as strange Mariners on the Sea; there be great storms and tempests, great Rocks, and Sands. The Sea is the World, the Ship is the Church; Heaven, the Haven; the Devill raiseth up many boysterous Storms and Tempests, to sinke our poor souls into Despera-

tion:

tion: Now then by faith we cast Anchor upon the Foundation of Gods Election, which cannot be removed.

But in this place, by *Favour, Face, and Countenance of God*, is meant that Favour and mercy of God, whereby God gave *David* the Kingdome in the stead of *Saul*, advancing him to be King of *Israel*, and Gods Lievtenant on Earth, that God would defend him and keep him, to govern his people *Israel*.

Whereas *David* observed Gods dealing with *Saul*, a wicked King, and how God plagued and punished *Saul* for his disobedience against the Word of God, and thereby is warned to take heed of the same Judgements of God, lest they fall upon him: We learn, that it is the duty of every man and woman; to observe and mark Gods dealings with others, and his just judgements upon ungodly sinners, that thereby we may learn to fear the like Judgements on our selves, and it is a great point of wisdom to learn to be wise by other mens harmes;

Doct. 2.
The godly feare, when they remember Gods judgements on others.

Zep, 3. 19

harms; and for this end the Lord doth plague wicked and ungodly men, that his children might learn to amend. Even as we see notorious Malefactors are hanged on a Gibbet, that others seeing their shamefull ends might beware. The Lord having punished sundry nations about his people, saith, *He thought they would have learned to fear God by their example.*

Vse

Well seeing, this is that God looks for at our hands, and which he aimed at in punishing wicked men, namely, that we should be warned by it, and take heed of their sins: Let us be wise and observe Gods judgments upon wicked men, and when we see a wicked man punished, a murderer, a contemner, a blasphemer, a whoremonger, or the like; then let us fear if we live in the same sins, we pluck not down the same judgements upon us: And as *David* here calls to mind *Saul*, how he for his rebellion and disobedience was cast off from God; so let us call to mind the spectacle of Gods judgments on wicked men, and take heed of their sins, lest we taste of their

their plagues and punishments.

We learn, that for sinne the Lord doth deprive his children of his Favour, and as it were cast them out of his presence for a time: Thus we shall see, God hath spoiled men of great Riches and Honour for their sins, and brought them to extream shame and misery: Look on *Eli*, and his two sons, look on *Saul*, that wicked King; look on that persecuting tyrant *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Haman*, *Achitophel*, &c.

Deut. 3.
Sin takes away the feeling of Gods favour for a time.
1 Sam. 15
1 Sam. 3.
Dan. 4. 26
Ester 3.

Vse 1.

1 Sam. 2. 3.

This should admonish all men to take heed of sin and rebellion against God; for certainly the Lord will abase all such as be proud against him, he will cast them out of his presence, make their names to rot and stink in the sight of men: *Those that honor me I will honour, but those that dishonour me, I wil dishonour them:* and therefore if you would not be dishonoured in this world, and provoke the Lord to cast you out of his presence and favour, Oh then beware how you sin and rebell against God; for if thou be as dear to God as *Eli*, which was Gods High Priest, yet he will bring shame upon thy head.

This

Use 2.
Folly of
world-
lings de-
scribed.

This shewes the madnesse of those men and women, who desiring to enjoy the honours, riches, and dignities, profits and preferments, they take a most preposterous and very wrong course; for how do men seek for preferment, honour, and promotion, lands and livings? namely, by oppression, bribery, usury, extortion, and the like. Now alas, we see, that it is a vaine course, and the next way to strip a man naked of all these things, and to bring him to shame and reproach, misery and poverty; for sin brings all these things upon them.

But if you would come to honour and dignity, riches, and preferment, then seek to keep the favour of God, serve him, worship him, honour him, and he will honour them that doe so; and if thou seekest these things by wicked and unlawfull means, certainly the Lord will cast dung in thy face.

2ly. When *David* prayes, *That God would not take his holy Spirit from him*, he means not the essence of the three Persons, but his gifts and graces, the vertue of Gods Spirit sanctifying

fyng his heart, and renewing of him. So then if we understand these words, we must understand this Objection.

Quest. Whether that the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, wrought in the hearts of Gods children, can be totally and finally lost, as *David*: words seem to imply.

For the clear answer of this question, we must know, that the gifts of the Spirit be either temporary, for this life, or else spirituall, for the life to come: Now of the former there is no question, but the temporary gifts of the Spirit may be lost utterly.

Again, the spirituall gifts and vertues of the Spirit be of two sorts, some common to the Elect and Reprobate, some proper and peculiar to Gods elect and chosen children. Now concerning the gifts of Gods Spirit, which be common to the wicked as well as the godly, to hear the word, to preach the word, and to do such like things, they may be lost.

Graces
of God
double.

Thirdly, the gifts of Gods Spirit are such, as are either essentiall to faith, and without which faith cannot

not be, or else the effects and fruits of faith, which are not of the essence of faith. Such gifts of the Spirit as be not of the essence of Faith, or absolutely necessary to eternall life, the Lord doth sometimes take away for a time; as namely, the purity of a good Conscience, that inward peace, which doth accompany it, the sense and feeling of Gods love in Christ, and his speciall favour, cheerfulness of spirit in praying, hearing, and such holy duties, joy in the holy Ghost, patience, the gift of prayer and such like, because the love of God, and the salvation of the faithfull may stand without these for a time.

But to speak of the saving graces of Gods sanctified spirit, as faith in Gods promises, hope of eternall life, assurance of Gods mercy, through Jesus Christ, love of God, his Word, and Children, these graces can never be lost wholly: true it is, they may be lessened, and sometimes seem to be lost for the time; but yet certain it is, they cannot be wholly and final-

ly lost; That they be as the Sun under a Cloud, and as fire raked up in the ashes, or as the Trees in Winter; but they cannot be extinguished, lost, and taken clean away; but just as the Sun shines clear, the Clouds being scattered, and the fire gives light and heat being stirred: So faith, hope, affiance, joy, comfort, peace of Conscience, and the feeling of Gods love are renewed, and shew themselves clear again.

Seeing that the knowledge and saving graces of Gods holy and sanctified Spirit, cannot totally and finally be lost, this is matter of endless comfort to every true child of God in the time of temptation, and grievous tryall: For if ever thou foundest and eldest in thy heart, true Faith in Christ Jesus, sound repentance, hope of eternall life, love of God; howsoever these may be much weakened, and for a time, in thy sense and feeling seem to be lost; yet they can never be taken away: Yea if thou dost carefully attend the means: as namely, the sincere Preaching of the Word

Vse I.
Comfort
to the
godly
that cannot
be
lost.

administration of the Sacraments, continuall, humble, and earnest prayer, the Lord will revive them, and renew them again.

Use 2.

This must serve to instruct and direct us, how to judge of them, who fall sometimes into pangs of despair, uttering words of desperation, that they are damned persons and Reprobates, and cry out thus of themselves: truly if ever we saw in them the sound worke of grace and true Repentance, delight in the Word, care to lead a godly life, love to God's children, &c. wee are, in Charity, to hope the best of them, to think that they belong to God, and that they speak they know not what of themselves, for they speak according to their present sense and feeling: When as indeed, in time of temptation and trouble of minde, they be like a man that is grievous sick, he can relish no meat, every thing seems bitter unto him, because his mouth is out of temper; but when hee comes to health, he judgeth otherwise. Even so

To these poor distressed souls, in their trouble and affliction, they speak they know not what; not as their estate is in truth, but as they think it to be, according to their present sense and feeling.

Hence we see what to answer to that Objection, That many men, who have made a fair profession of the truth, had excellent gifts, and yet have clean fallen away. So, *Heb. 6. Such as be enlightened, tasted of the heavenly gift, were partakers of the Holy Ghost, tasted of the Word of God, and of the powers of the world to come; such men, notwithstanding, may fall away, and that finally.*

Use 3.

Heb. 6.

I answer, That there is nothing spoken there of the true work of grace and sanctification, of saving Faith, sound Repentance, hearty Obedience, and a new life; but onely of such common gifts as may befall a Reprobate: and therefore Saint *John* shews the cause why they fell away, namely, they were never true and lively Members of the Church, or of Jesus Christ; never truly ingrafted

into his Myſticall body ; they had knowledge, and were enlightned, taſted of the heavenly gifts and graces of Gods Spirit , and had ſome glimmering of the joyes of the life to come, which the Child of God enjoys ; but the ſound work of grace , a renewed heart, faith, repentance, obedience , and a ſanctified life was ever wanting , they were but Hypocrites,

1 Joh. 2.
19.

They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.

Mat. 7. 21

And therefore, it behoves us all to take heed , that we content not our ſelves with the common gifts and mercies of the Holy Ghoſt , which a Reprobate may have : For it is certain, that excellent gifts will not availe a man to ſalvation, unleſſe there be the true work of Grace , ſaving Faith, ſound Repentance , and hearty Obedience.

VERSE

VERSE 12, and 13.

*Restore me to the joy of thy salvation,
and stablish me with thy free spirit.
Then shall I teach thy wayes unto the
wicked, and the sinners shall be con-
verted unto thee.*

IN these words are contained an earnest Prayer of *David* unto God, for the renewing of God's mercy, and feeling of his love again in the 12. *verse*. In the 13. *verse*, he uses a reason to move the Lord thereunto: Namely, that if the Lord shall receive him into favour again, and testifie his love unto him in the pardon of his sinnes, then he will not be unmindfull of Gods dealing with him, but become a Preacher and Proclaimer of God's mercy unto others, to draw them to God, in shewing what God hath done for his soul; and so, that by the example of Gods mercy to him, others should be wonne.

In the 12. Verse, he makes a two-fold Petition unto God: First, for the former feeling of an assurance of

Part of
the verse.

God's love and mercy for the pardon of his sins. Secondly, that God would uphold him with his free Spirit, so as now being delivered out of the cursed thralldom and slavery of sin, he might cheerfully and freely serve the Lord, and run the way of his Commandments.

*Restore to me the joy of thy
Salvation.*

No joy
can com-
fort mans
soul but
the joy
of Gods
salvation

AS if he should have said, O Lord my God, I acknowledge and confesse, that all the while I served thee, and lived in thy fear, led a holy and godly life, and kept an upright heart, that I found wonderfull and exceeding joy in the assurance of thy love, and mercy in Christ for my salvation: But since I rebelled against thee, and wilfully brake thy holy Commandements, I have deprived my soul of that heavenly comfort and consolation, and felt terrors and griefs, fears and cares, and exceeding vexation. Now, mercifull God, I humbly entreat thee to restore me again to thy joy and comfort, to assure me of thy love and favour; that thou

thou art graciously reconciled unto me, that I may receive my former comfort: And not onely that, but because I see how weak I am, and have no power to stand, without thy help and grace, I humbly entreat thee to stay and strengthen me, to establish thy grace in me, and so uphold me in thy obedience, that I may freely and heartily obey thee all my daies.

The childe of God truly called, justified, and sanctified by God's Spirit, if he once fall against God, and provoke him to anger by his wilfull disobedience, doth feel exceeding anguish and sorrow of heart, great grief and trouble of mind, fears and cares, lest the Lord should reject him; so that there is a hell in his poore soule, and wounded conscience, till he be again reconciled to God by Faith and Repentance. So long as *David* walked with God in uprightness of heart, he had exceeding great joy and comfort in the Lord his God, was assured of his love for pardon of his sins, and eternall salvation; but when he fell to adultery

Doct. 1.
Fruit of
sin de-
scribed.
Note.

Luke 23.

and murder, and so rebelled against God, it is wonderfull to see into what a gulph of misery he plunged himself, what fears and cares, what doubts and troubles did vex his soul, and wound his Conscience. Even so it is with all the godly, while they have a care to fear their God, serve and please him, and keep an upright heart before the Lord, lead a godly and Christian life, they feel and find in themselves exceeding joy, and wonderfull comfort, with assurance of God's love in Christ for their salvation: But if at any time they break out to sinne, and rebell against God by wilfull disobedience, then they shall find an Hell in their Consciences, Troubles, Teares, and Cares for the time. Who can tell what fears and cares *Peter* felt? in what grief and sorrow of heart he was in, when cowardly he denied his Lord and Master? it cost him many a bitter tear. The reason of this Doctrine is, because all peace and comfort to a poor soul, springs from the sense and comfortable feeling of God's love in Christ
Jesus

Jesus for the pardon of sin, and eternall salvation; and therefore when that is lost, alas! what peace or comfort can they have? Secondly, they do by such wilfull sin and disobedience, grieve the Spirit, and make the holy Ghost sad with them, and so do what they can to expell the Spirit of God in them. Now where the Spirit of God is made sad and grieved, how can there be any true joy?

Seeing there is such sweet comfort in a godly and Christian life, while we walk with God, and serve and please him in Spirit and Truth; and when men sin and rebell against their God, they pull down upon their heads such wofull miseries, troubles, and cares: How should this make every man exceeding carefull of sin, which brings such wofull miseries and judgments unto our souls, such torments, fears, and cares.

To the joy of thy salvation.

AS if he should have said, O Lord my God, when thou didst assure me again of thy love and
S 5 favour

Use 2.

Doct. I.
Favour
of God
is a
Christi-
ans chief
joy.

favour for the pardon of my sins, and eternall salvation, I had exceeding joy therein. Now I do humbly entreat thee to restore it to me again.

Hence mark, what is the thing the children of God do most desire and crave at God's hand, & wherein they do most rejoyce; namely, the favour of God, and assurance of his love, in and through Jesus Christ, that they know that God is graciously reconciled unto them, that they be in his favour, and shall never perish, but shall everlastingly be saved. *David* was a King, and wanted no temporall commodity, pleasure, or delight whatsoever, wherein worldly men rejoyce; but he conceived no kind of joy at all in these things, to be out of God's favour: And therefore prayes unto God for the feeling of the true joy, and that is, of *His salvation*, and that will minister unto him matter of true rejoycing indeed. Alas! most men being carnall, desire riches, honour, pleasure. *But Lord, let me see thy loving countenance, thy favour and grace; & that shall do me more good*
and

PS 4. 6, 7.

and comfort, than all the things in the world. The poor Publican begs for this, *Lord be mercifull to me a sinner.* So Paul professeth of himself, that he esteemed all things but as dung, in comparison of Christ Jesus, and the favour of God in him. And the reason is plain, because if a man had all the world, and wanted the love and favour of God, and was in his displeasure, and under the curse of God, what good could it do him? Even as if a Subject should have ten thousand pounds, and yet the King cannot abide nor endure him, but seeks his death. And therefore the child of God, if he were asked, what is the thing he most desires in all the world, would answer, Mercy, and the love of God in Jesus Christ. He would despise Honour, Lands, Livings, Gold, Silver, Pleasures, and Delights; and prefer one dram or scruple of mercy, and the least drop of Christs blood for salvation, before all the world.

This may serve to reprove thousands in the world, carnall men and

Luk. 8.
Phil. 2. 8.

Mat. 23.
26.

Psal. 23.
1, 2.

Use 1.

women, so they have the world at will, and may live at ease, eat, drink, and be merry; they feel no want of God's mercy, no need of Christ's blood; they esteem not God's favour and love, desire not reconciliation, but say, *Who will shew us any good?* Well, didst thou never feel the want of God's kindnesse and mercy? no hungering and thirsting after Jesus Christ and his righteousness? It is openly manifest, thou dost not belong to God, thou wast never yet truly humbled.

Let this Doctrine admonish us all, to labour with our hearts, to be affected with this; namely, to esteem more of God's love and favour, & assurance of his mercy, than all the world, let us desire it more, let us rejoyce more in it. So as if the question should be asked, What is the chiefest thing that thou dost most desire and affect, & what thou dost most delight and rejoyce in, of all the things in the world, wee may be able in truth to answer, and say with feeling and comfort, I desire nothing more

under Heaven, than the mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus, to be in his favour, to be reconciled unto his Majesty; and, with *Paul*, to esteem all things but dung in comparison of that. And till this be found in us in some measure, we can never find true comfort in our souls, and be assured, that we have true saving Faith in Christ. For this is a certain signe and note of an humble and believing heart, to hunger and thirst after God's mercy in Christ, and to esteem more highly of the least drop of Christ his precious blood for our salvation, than of the whole world, if it were offered unto us.

We must labour to manifest this our earnest desire, and great account of God's mercy, by using all blessed meanes to attain unto it: We must repent and bewail our sins, leave and forsake them. We must embrace Jesus Christ by faith, and cry with tears unto God for mercy: *Knock, Seek, Ask*, And let us do as the men of *Tyrus* and *Sidon*, when *Herod* took a grudge against them, and intended to make war upon them, they came

Use 3.

*Mat. 7. 7.
Act. 13.
10.*

all with one accord, and besought *Blastus* the King's Chamberlain to hve peace. So let us go unto Jesus Christ, the true peace-maker, desire him to speak to God the Father for us, so that there may be an everlasting peace:

Dott. 3.

The
state of
Gods
children
is not al-
ways a-
like.

When *David* prayeth, that God would restore unto him *the joy of his salvation*, and those sweet comforts he was wont to feel and find in God's mercy, and feeling of his tender love in Christ, we learn, That the estate of God's children is not alwaies alike full of joy, and comfort, and gladnesse; but sometimes full of grieve, and misery, and cares, and troubles: For the dearest children of God, who are replenished with the greatest measure of joy and comfort, in the feeling and assurance of God's love in Christ; when as the Lord leaves them to fall into some sin against Knowledge and Conscience, they shall find not onely a great decay, but an utter losse of joy and comfort for a time. Thus it was with *David*, who though he

was a man after God's own heart, enriched with great blessings, and spirituall mercies, most dearly beloved of God, sanctified in great measure; yet now having fallen into these two filthy sins, of adultery and murther, see how he is perplexed in great distresse, and trouble of mind; and how the feeling of God's mercy, and joy in God's Spirit, seemed to be clean lost. So it was with *Peter*, and so it is in every child of God. Didst thou ever sin against knowledge and conscience since thou wast converted? thou shalt find then a wonderfull deadnesse of heart, trouble and vexation of mind, & feeling of God's anger, with the losse of comfort for a time.

Seeing finnes against Knowledge and Conscience, wound the soule exceedingly, and also deprive us of the peace, and comfort, and joy of God's Spirit, and bring terrors, fears, and gripings with them: let us avoid, as all sinne, so especially finnes against knowledge and conscience; and labour in all good things, in all places, and at all times, to live and walk

Luk. 23.

Use 2.

walk so upright with God, that thou never hurt or wound thy conscience, though thou mightest get the greatest gain, honour, or pleasure; yet if it be sinne, and that against thy knowledge and conscience, abhor it, fly from it, commit it not, if thou lovest thine own soul. For if sins of ignorance shall not escape punishment, unlesse men repent, much more sins against knowledge and conscience; for these provoke the Lord exceedingly to turne away his favour from us, draw downe his judgments upon us, wound our consciences, deprive us of the feeling of God's love and favour, bring trouble of mind, and a wounded conscience. O then, would you enjoy this great blessing of peace of conscience, which is a continuall feast? would you be loath to lose the feeling of God's love, and comfort of his holy Spirit? Avoid all sins, but especially presumptuous sins against knowledge and conscience; they wound and hurt us, especially depriving us of all peace and consolation.

Use 5.

If the Lord should at any time leave

leave us to sinne, even presumptuous
sins against Knowledge and Consci-
ence, which is a fearfull thing, yet
let us not despair with *Cain*, and say,
*Our sins are greater than can be for-
given*; but flye to God's mercy, and
there seek to renew God's love a-
gain, intreating the Lord to restore
unto us the joy of his salvation, and
then we may obtain the favour of
God again, and renew the feeling of
his love: let us truly repent, and be-
waile our grievous and hainous sinnes,
seek earnestly for grace and pardon,
and give the Lord no rest at all, till
we find that he be reconciled unto us
in Christ Jesus.

Mark (I pray you) what was the
speciall thing wherein *David* the ho-
ly servant of God, did reioyce, not
in gold or silver, nor in pleasure, and
carnall delight, not in lands, and li-
vings, nor in his Kingdome; but in
the salvation of God, in his love, in
pardon of his sins, and salvation of his
soul: so as hence we learn, that
there is no true joy in any other
thing in the World, but onely in the
mer-

Doct. 4
Pardon
of sin the
soundest
joy.

Phi. 3.7.
& 8.

Luk. 10.
30.

mercy of God, and the salvation of our souls.

And indeed, what other joy can there be? For though the Lord should bestow on us all things which he hath made, with abundance of the things of this life; yea, though with *David* we might command a Kingdome; yet unlesse withall we have this comfort, that we are at peace with God, and have our sins pardoned; (alas) they would all prove unto us as *Job's* friend, *miserable comforters*. But, poor souls, many know no other comfort, but such as arises from temporall things, as gold, silver, &c. wherein they differ not from beasts, which have their delight as well as they, in those things which are fitting and agreeable to their nature.

Seeing *David* places all his joy and spirituall rejoycing in the salvation of God, that is, in the pardon of his sins, in the feeling of God's love, and in the salvation of his soul, therefore it shewes, that there is no other cause of sound joy, but in this alone; so that if we have this, we have great
cause

cause to rejoyce and be glad ; but if this be wanting , either we had never the feeling of God's love , nor assurance of salvation , or else have lost it, and therefore should use all blessed means to attain unto it again ; for we cannot have one dramme of saving comfort , and true joy, but onely in the favour of God, and the assurance of his love for our salvation.

This shews, that all the joy of wicked men, in all their sports and pastimes is no true and solid joy , but a carnall joy, a swinish joy : For how can the heart of that man or woman rejoyce , which knowes not whether God loves them or hates them, whether they shall be saved or damned ; what joy can they have ? It is madness rather than joy and mirth. *David* saith, that the wicked men joy in their *Corn, Oyl, Wine*, outward, worldly, and temporall things ; but he desires the loving countenance of the Lord's favour and grace, which shall make him joy more, than all they in their pomp and vanities : And when it will cause him to lie down in rest, peace, and safety :

VJe 2.

safely : whereas the joy of wicked men is gone in a moment, utterly lost, and past recovery for ever.

And establish me with thy free spirit.

2.
Part of
the verse.

Note.

THis second part of the Verse contains a prayer to the Lord for a new mercy : Namely, the blessed grace of corroboration ; to be strengthened in grace and obedience, and kept from sinne by the grace and Spirit of God in time to come : As if he should have said , O Lord my God , I do not only pray for the pardon of my sins past , which are many and great ; but I do humbly intreat thy Divine Majesty to give me power , and to strengthen me against the like evils in time to come : for I know my weaknesse, and the wickednesse of my heart to be prone to all sinne by Nature ; and if thou shouldest pardon my sinnes past , and not prevent and keep me from sinne in time to come , I should easily mar all , and run head-long into all sinne, and therefore , I beseech thy Majesty establish and strengthen me with grace from thy holy Spirit , that I may serve

serve and please thee all my dayes
with a willing and ready heart.

Stablish me.

THe word signifies properly, to
underprop and shore up some-
thing that is weak, declining, and
ready to fall.

Hence learn, that even the best of
Gods Children, that have the grea-
test graces, and be strengthened in
Faith, yet if they be left unto them-
selves, alas, they be as weak as wa-
ter, they be not able to stand against
the least assault, and temptation of
the Devill. This *David* felt and found
in himselfe, and confessed his wicked-
nesse, and desires the Lord to e-
stablish and uphold him, to shore
him up by the grace of his holy Spi-
rit. *Peter* who seemed to be a valiant
Champion, and defied his Enemies,
and vowed, he would rather die than
deny his Lord and Master Christ Je-
sus, yet being left to himselfe, how
foulely did he fall, and cowardly de-
ny him three times in one hour, at the
voyce of a little Girle? so all the falls
and infirmities of Gods Children,
though

Dott. 5.

Man
weak be-
ing left
to him-
self.

Ex. 15.

34.

1c. 13. 24

Pl. 78. 49

Ex. 9. 27.

Iud. 3. 13.

Mar. 22

45.

Hcb. 6.

Ro. 7. 24.

though never so wise as *Solomon*, strong as *Sampson*, righteous as *Lot*, holy as *David*, doth prove this to be true. And *Paul*, though he was a blessed Vessell of mercy, greatly enlightened and sanctified, cries out, *O wretched man that I am*; and fears the great corruptions of his heart. The childe of God may be compared to a staffe in a man's hand, so long as thou dost stay it and hold it, it will stand upright; but pull away your hand, downe it will fall of it selfe. Even so do we stand, while the Lord doth stay us and uphold us; but if he take away his hand, and leave us, downe we go. We be like a little Infant that is in the Nurses hand, so long as she holds it, it will go, and move, and stand; but if she pull way her hand, it falls, and takes a knock. As God is the Author of all grace, and first Fountain of all mercy, he alone can turn the heart, work Faith, Repentance, and Obedience. For it is God alone that must give the second grace, namely, corroboration, continuance in grace, or grace to continue

rinue in faith and obedience.

This confutes the Doctrine of the Papists, which hold, that a man having grace from God to believe and repent, can merit at God's hands grace to continue; that God should *ex condigno*, give him grace to continue; and that a man being once just, can make himself more perfect. But *David* doth here confesse, that all is of God. *use 1.*

This serves to reprove them, who trust too much on their own power and goodnesse, relye upon their owne wisdom, knowledge, and strength: When once they get a little knowledge and taste of the Word, Oh, they think themselves sure and well, they fear no danger, they despise the Devill: so long as they say their prayers, and serve God well, they hope God will keep them, and so are secure and careless. But of all men, these be in greatest danger, that least fear danger. Look on *Peter*, he was never more weak, than when he thought himself most strong. *I said I shall never be moved; but thou turnedst away thy* *use 2.*

Isa. 30. 6.
1 Cor. 10

face, and I was sore troubled. *Pride goes before a fall.*

How should this make every man to fear himself, to suspect his owne weakness: *Blessed is the man that fears alwayes, but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into destruction or evill*; where Solomon sheweth, that a man that doth fear himselfe, and his own weakness, is happy, but he that is secure, and trusts in himselfe, shall certainly fall into evill. The secure sinner, that fears no danger, is the greatest sinner; And therefore not knowing our own weaknesse, how unable we are to stand of our selves, or to do any good at all, except the Lord endue us with his holy Spirit: it must be a means to make us relye upon the Lord, and pray unto Him, that he would uphold us in integrity, faith, obedience, and in true repentance: for if *David, Peter, &c.* did fall, whicher then shall we fall, if the Lord do but a little leave us to our selves?

VERSE

Then shall I teach.

Sense.

I HAT is, after I shall find, and feel
thy mercy bestowed upon me, I
will, like a Vessel of mercy, draw it
out to the good of others. *I will*, that
is, I that have fallen, & sinned so grie-
vously, and transgressed thy Comman-
dements, will teach and publish how
mercifull, good, and gracious thou
hast been to me, and to my soul, and
will speak out of the sense and feeling
of mine own conscience.

Thy wayes.

BY the wayes of God here, is
meant that course and manner
of dealing which the Lord taketh
with sinners, when they do truly re-
pent. Namely, that he is most ready
and willing to embrace them, & shew
mercy unto them, when they shall ac-
knowledge and confesse their sins, be-
waile them, begge the pardon of them,
and seek to him for mercy.

The
goodness
of God
towards
ourselves
must be
made
known.

Seeing *David* doth here professe,
that if God shall deale thus graci-
ously with him, that then he will be
a proclaimer of the same mercy to
others : We learn, that it is the duty

of every one to shew unto others what God hath done for his soule : when God is good and gracious unto us, we must still be ready to acknowledge the same unto others, thereby to draw them on likewise to a manifestation of the truth, and to seek for the same favour and grace at Gods hands, *Mat. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* Thus the Spirit of God in the Scriptures remembreth the righteousness of *Noah*, the faith and obedience of *Abraham*, the patience of *Job*, the chastity of *Joseph*, the meeknesse of *Moses*. And Christ himself doth testifie of the graces of God that shined in *John Baptist*, that he was a burning and shining light, *Job. 5.* Thus the Apostle *Peter* testifieth, *1 Pet. 2. Have your conversation honest amongst the Gentiles, that they which speak evill of you, as of evill doers, may by your good workes which they shall see, glorifie God in the day of visitation, 1 Cor. 9. v. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 8. 1, 2. Rom. 4. 11, 13.*

We learn hence ever to be ready *Ufe 1.*

to make known unto others What God hath done for our selves ; if so they may further Religion, or provoke others to godlinesse, or bring glory to God. God is not ashamed of us, to be called our God, and to do us good : let us then never be ashamed to acknowledge his love unto us ; for it were a foolish modesty in us to conceal those things which should be uttered. There was a time indeed when Christ would not have himself, or his works known, but that was when that knowledge might hinder him and his Preaching. But *Mat. 10. 27.* he commanded his Apostles to speak that in the light, which he had told them in darknesse; and to Preach that on the House-tops, which he had told them in the eare, for now would Christ have himselfe published abroad. And thus we see how to behave our selves in respect of Gods gifts; we must not be ashamed to confess them, but declare them.

Dott. 2.

Thank-
fulness
required.

Seeing *David* here professes unto the Lord, that he will not be unmindfull and unthankfull for his mercy

mercy shewed unto him, but will to the uttermost of his power, praise God for it, and shews his thankfulness, in drawing others to God. Hence we learn, that it is the duty of all the children of God, that they should labour with their own souls, to be thankfull unto God for every blessing he bestows upon them, to be mindfull of it, to praise God for it, and to shew it in doing good to others. It is all the Lord looks for at our hands, to acknowledge his love and kindnesse, to be thankfull for it, and when we shall be truly thankfull for a benefit received, it is an excellent meanes to move the Lord to bestow a new blessing upon us; as we see, if a poor man receive a small favour at our hands, and shall be thankfull for it; wee will say hee is worthy to have a good turne, it is well bestowed: I see he is thankfull for it. So when the Lord bestovveth a benefit upon a man, and Tees he is thankfull for it, and speaks of it to the honour of God, the Lord is moved thereby to bestovv another, but
T, hee

Phil. 4. 4.
Exod. 18.
20.

Pf. 126.
Gen. 14.
19.
Pf. 32. 22
Pf. 32. 9.

he that is unthankfull for the old, is not worthy to receive new.

Pf. 33: 1.

Hast thou received any special favour, blessing or benefit of God? know it is thy duty to be thankfull for it, to acknowledge it, to speak of it, and to praise God for it. *Rejoyce ye righteous in the Lord, for it becomes upright men to be thankfull.* It is a comely and most fit thing; and David calls upon his soule oft-times to performe this duty: *Praise thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy name: praise thou the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*

Pf. 103: 1

And above all other mercies, let us blesse God for his love in Christ for the pardon of our sins, as David doth here, and *Psal. 103. Forget not all his benefits, who gave thee pardon of thy sins, and forgave thee all thine iniquities.* And therefore let us remember this duty, and think more seriously of Gods blessings and benefits bestowed upon us. The greatnesse of them and number, and continuance of them, and so labour in some measure to be thankfull unto God, and especially

especially for the pardon of our finnes in Christ Jesus : And withall, let us shew it in doing what good wee can unto others.

Let us shun that foule sin of unthankfulnesse to forget Gods blessings, and passe over his mercies: Let us not be like the nine Lepers, who not one of them returned to praise God, onely the poore Samaritan, finding himself cleansed, came to blesse God for it : So let us take heed that wee be not found in that number who forget Gods favour : The Lord hath been good unto us, washed and cleansed our souls in Christs blood, let us return unto God, let us confesse it to his glory, and with *David* call on our souls not to forget the benefits of the Lord.

It is a note of an unthankfull heart to obtain a benefit, and not to acknowledge it. Praise is comely, and well becommeth the Saints of God : The want whereof taketh away the comfort and sweet fruit of Gods blessings from us. It is a great offence to be unthankfull unto men, but farre

Use 1.

greater unto God, by whom we live, move, and have our being. And therefore let us learn, that whensoever we have obtained any favour, or blessing at Gods hands, be it concerning this life, or the live to come; Let us thankfully return the C'lves of our lips unto him; and let us never shew our selves more ready to aske, than we are willing to praise the Lord when he hath granted the request of our lips.

Doct. 3.
Fruit of
Faith to
seek the
good of
others.

ps 66.6.

It is a special fruit of Faith, and unfeigned repentance, to convey grace unto others, to shew what God hath done for our souls, and to draw out the blessings which God hath bestovved upon us, to the good and benefit of others. The Prophet David calleth all men unto him: and makes his speech: *Come* (saith he) *I will shew you what God hath done for my soul*: And the Elect are called vessels of mercy, because they being themselves filled vvith the mercy of God, they should dravv out the same good Liquor for the comfort of others, St. Paul saith, *God had mercy on him*

him that he might shew mercy unto others. The child of God is not like unto churlish Nabal, to say : Every man for himself, and keep all for themselves : but they be pittifull and bountifull; yea, and (to their power) helpfull unto others.

This may serve to comfort those who have been carefull for the performance of this duty, that have been carefull to make others partakers of the same comfort they have reaped themselves. It is a blessed thing indeed, when men have endeavoured to their power to benefit others, to exhort them, to admonish them, to comfort them, and in all things to have sought their good. Oh what a wonderfull consolation and comfort shall this be unto us when wee leave this World, and go the way of all flesh, to remember we have sought the good of others, D. n. 12.3. *They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament,* Luk. 12.v.43. *Blessed is that servant whom his Master comming shall find so doing,* Wee shall find more comfort of heart,

Psa. 119.
Gal. 3.
2 Cor. 1.
Ef. 38. 1.
Luke, 22
2.

Vse 1.

and joy of Conscience, when we depart this life, that we have been faithfull in that little committed to our trust, and made others to partake of it, than if we had great abundance of earthly blessings.

1st se 2.

This may serve to reprove that common conceit in mens mindes, that so long as they do well themselves, they need not care how others do : whether they sink or swim ; and therefore they keep all to themselves, never look to benefit others, like a covetous and foolish *Nabal*, part not with a bit to *David* : So these keep all for themselves, by no meanes seek to draw out the graces of *God* for the good of others. But it is impossible for any Christian man or woman, who hath tasted truly of the mercy of *God* for his comfort, and the work of grace, but he must communicate the same to the good of others ; and indeed they are never so profitable as then : As we see spices though never so sweet and savory, are not commendable untill they be rubbed and chased : And therefore let

11. 38. 19

us remember to practise this duty, to help others, and instruct them, and communicate our knowledge, comfort, experience, and judgment even to the good of others.

When *David* saith, he will teach, not his own wayes, but Gods, namely how the Lord dealeth with penitent sinners, wee learn what it is that the Minister of the Word ought especially to teach poor sinners: namely, *The wayes of God*, That is, how God deales with poor sinners: Namely, that he is most willing to embrace them, and pardon their crimes, if they will unfeignedly repent. Christ was exceeding plentiful in this kinde of Teaching; howsoever he did sometimes declare and pronounce judgment to impenitent sinners, yet it was his usuall course to preach Gods infinite mercy to all such as would repent; to invite them, to perswade and allure them to turn to God.

Well then, this may direct all such as the Lord hath called to Preach his Word, to take this course, that howsoever they may and must pronounce

Doct. 4.
What
Doctrine
Ministers
ought to
teach.

Mat. 13.
18.

Ro. 12. 1.
2 Cor. 5.
18.

Use 2.

Rev. 3.
Luk. 15.

nounce Gods judgments against impenitent offenders, yet they must preach Gods infinite mercy in Christ to all that will repent ; and shew how ready the Lord is to shew mercy to all them that confesse and acknowledge their faults, and be weery of them, and desire pardon. For sure it is, that if there be any sparke of grace in mens hearts, when they shall heare of Gods abundant mercy in Christ, that the Lord standeth at the door and knocks ; that the Lord, like the Father of the Prodigal Child, will meet us in the mid-way ; it must needs, if there be not a heart of steel, make our bowelserne, and for shame to seek unto the Lord.

And it was *Pauls* manner to intreat men that they would be reconciled unto God, to beseech them in his name with love and kindness, with teares, and prayers, to pray them, to intreat them, to beseech his hearers : And we shall find that churlish, rough, and harsh dealing, great words, and thundering Speeches,

Speeches, be not alwayes the best to winne mens soules : But when we shall with a mild and loving spirit intreat men, and beseech them to repent and turn to God, it must needs affect them.

It must stirre their hearts up to a most careful and attentive hearing and listning to the Word of God. For a man cannot perceive and know the wayes of God by nature : No, by nature we conceive of God as a terrible judge and angry God, and flye from him as *Adam* did, and therefore we had need to have the word of God preached and taught unto us, and be instructed in the wayes of God, how the Lord our good God hath shewed mercy unto great sinners, and will to us if we can repent, and seek unto him. For the Lord must draw us by his mercy, else we cannot come at him.

*To the wicked : And sinners shall
be converted unto thee.*

That is, impenitent sinners, such as live in sin without repentance.

Hence mark who had need to be taught

Dolt. 5.

Ignorant
are to be
taught
the waies
of God.

taught in the wayes of God, namely, poor sinners, that live and lye in sinne, even the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*; and such as sit in darknesse, & in the shadow of Death, such as never heard of God, or Faith, or Repentance, &c. Such poor souls had need to be taught the wayes of God.

Use. I.

Rom. 10.

14.

Prov. 29.

18.

Mat. 14.

This may admonish all those that be set over Gods people, Magistrates, and such as have power in their hand, to provide that such poore ignorant people as want the meanes, may be taught the wayes of God. *How shall they call on him, on whom they have not beleaved? how shall they beleieve on him of whom they have not heard? how shall they heare without a Preacher?* And where praphecyng failes, the people perish. And it is said of our Saviour Christ, that when he saw the people as poor sheep having no Shepherd, he had compassion on them, and his bowels earned towards them. Oh that the bowels of all such that have charge to look unto it, might earne for the poor souls of this Land, to provide for them the bread of life.

The

The chief cause why men live in sin, be so vile, wicked, and unclean, is because they be not taught the word and wayes of God. It could not be if they were taught and instructed, that they should be so vile and wicked, so ignorant, prophane, irreligious, and superstitious: But where visions faile, the people must needs perish.

And therefore those that seek to take away teaching and preaching of the word of God, of what spirits are they? *David*, he thinks it the onely way to bring men to God, to convert poor sinners; and therefore to take it away, to root out the Ministry of the word, and meanes of our salvation, what is it esse, but to cast away the soules of the people? to famish them, to pine them, and to starve them? And therefore let us pray unto God, through Christ Jesus, that the Lord of the Haruest would send forth painefull Labouers into his Haruest.

Mar. 9.

The second part of the verse shewes the fruit of this duty, that *David* will performe: Namely, that hereby

2. Part of the verse.

Doct. 9.
Conversion of a
sinner is
GODS
Work.

Jer. 13.
22.

hereby, by this Doctrine, and his example, many a poor sinner shall be converted unto God.

In that *David* here promiseth to himselfe this Use and Fruit, that he shall be by his preaching and example, a meanes to bring others to God, Hence we may learn a gracious comfort for all godly Ministers of the word, who labour both by Life and Doctrine to win others, that if they shall be painful in teaching, and carefull to live a godly life, they shall certainly find the blessing of God upon their labours, to the converting of sinners, and saving of souls. *If I had sent these Prophets, and if they had stood in my counsell, and declared my wayes unto my people, then they should have turned them from their evill wayes, and from the wickednesse of their own inventions.*

Where the Lord shews, that all such as be the true Prophets of God, stand in his stead, & teach his wayes, they shall see the blessing of God upon their labours : And the cause why men convert not souls, is because they

they were never sent of God, and do not teach Gods wayes, and stand not in his stand : or else because though they teach the truth, yet their lives be vile and wicked ; they pluck down with one hand, that they build with the other, and destroy that in life which they teach in Doctrine.

Hence marke the reason why so many great and learned men, of excellent gifts, Wit and Learning, do not convert many souls unto God : because they either teach not Gods wayes, but their own wayes, their Wit, Eloquence, and Devices ; or else though they teach well, yet they live ill, and so cause their Doctrine to be lesse regarded, and weaken the power of it by their sinfull life ; and it pleases God in his great mercy, to use the labour of his poor servants, who dare not utter nor speake their owne word, nor seek themselves, but Gods Word, in plain evidence and simplicity, and live according to their teaching, the Lord doth blesse their labors, for the conversion of sinners, and saving of poor souls.

Use 1.

Use 2.

Luke. 22,
23.

It might admonish all those, who either teach their own wayes by Painted Eloquence, Toyes, or Tales, or else though they teach the truth, that they joyne with it a godly life, else they may be long enough ere they do any good ; and if they would convert sinners, let them first be converted : *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren,* and let no such carelesse Ministers wonder that God gives no blessing to their labours, seeing they faile either in teaching Gods word truly and plainly, or else in life they live wickedly and ungodly. One *Achan* is enough to infect a whole Family, one *Jonas*, a fugitive servant of God is able to endanger a Ship, and the whole company in it. So one sin is able to destroy the soul of man ; Oh then what will a world of sinnes doe, which we dayly and hourly commit against our Creator !

VERSE

VERSE 14.

*Deliver me from blood, O God, the God
of my salvation, and my tongue shall
sing joyfully of thy righteousness.*

◆◆◆◆ N this Verse, yet once again,
◆ I ◆ David returnes to intreat
◆◆◆◆ for mercy and favour at the
hands of God, that he would pardon
his great and grievous sinnes, yea,
his bloody sinnes; and that God would
in mercy deliver him from that punishment
which was due unto him
for the same ; for he intreates the
Lord to deliver him from blood, that
is, his heynous and Capitall sinne of
murder, and shedding that innocent
blood of *Urias*, his faithfull servant,
and many others with him, so also the
punishment due for it.

David
cannot
satisfie
himself
in seeking
mercy for his
sinne.

1 Sam. 8

Parts of
the verse

This Verse containes two parts :
First, a Request with great earnest-
nesse to God for deliverance from
his grievous crime, *Deliver me from
blood.* Secondly, Reasons to move the
Lord thereunto ;—Namely, taken
from the honour and glory of God,
which

which he will shew forth : *And my tongue shall sing joyfully of thy righteousness.*

In the Petition first marke what is the Request : Namely, that God would deliver him from bloud ; that is, a most cruell and bloody sinne of shedding the innocent bloud of many of his subjects.

Secondly, the manner of his Request, *O God, thou art the God of my salvation*, that he prayes to God now with Faith, assuring himself, that upon his repentance God was now reconciled unto him ; and though he had sinned grievously, yet not cleane fallen from grace, but so as still he could call God, his God and the God of his salvation.

Deliver me from blood.

Doct. 1.
The hainousness
of the sin
of murder.

THAT is, from the punishment which is due unto me, for shedding the innocent bloud of *Urias*, and the rest which were slain with him.

We must observe that which hath been taught before ; namely, that *David* prayed often and earnestly unto God

God for the pardon of his finnes, hee could not at one or two Petitions obtain it, but is fain to pray again and again for pardon. Hence we learn that Murther and shedding of innocent blood is a most horrible sinne, and he that is guilty of blood, it will wound his conscience, it will make him to quake and tremble at Gods vengeance which pursues him, unlesse he repent; as in *Cain*, after he had slain his brother, and the Lord had brought him to a sight of his cruell murther, he cries out, that his sinne is greater then can be forgiven, and that every one that meets him would kill him; such is the conscience guilty of Murther, it can find no rest, no ease, neither in company, or alone, in any thing, but still torments the mind, till God gives grace truly to repent.

Neither may or must we think that this guilt and terrour of our Mind or Conscience commeth through the guiltiness of the Law, shame of the world, or fear of punishment: For let a Murtherer have security given him from all the
Laws

Gen. 4.

Laws and Freedome from all punishment, yet a Murderer should never be at quiet, his conscience would ever trouble and torment him, yea, and follow him up and down in all places, and open his own mouth to bewray himself. Thus are Gods judgments upon them that they should fear all things, who will not fear him that made all things? If a man had all the pleasures that heart could desire, yet that can yeeld him no true comfort and contentment, when the conscience is guilty of great and horrible sins: and albeit for a time the conscience of carnal men, that never truly repented of their sins, seemeth to be at rest, yet it is a wild and savage beast, which lying asleep, seemeth tame and gentle, but being raised and roused up, flyeth in a mans face.

Gen. 42.

1.

Use 1.

Seeing Murder, and shedding of innocent blood is so horrible a sinne, so odious and execrable, so fearfull and damnable, how should it make all men shun it, and be affraid of it, never to imbrue their hands in the blood of any man, for blood will

have

David's Repentance.

441

have blood. *Who so sheddeth mans blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God made he him.*

Gen. 9. 6

And this was one speciall thing which moved *David* to intreat the Lord, not onely to pardon his bloody sinne of killing *Uriah*, but also that he would not punish him, and bring his vengeance upon him, and his children after him, for shedding of his blood. Well then, abhor this fearfull sinne of murther, for blood will have blood, and will cry for vengeance to Heaven. And here we are to be sorry, and to bewaile our sinfull times, that shedding of blood is not punished more severely: Wilfull Murther is winked at, and mocked at, and made but a mony-matter: *Yea*, (saith the Lord) *because of Oathes the Land shall mourn*; so for murder it shall mourn! Well, let us beware of this foul sinne of marther, and shun all occasions that tend to it, as hatred, drunkenness, desire of revenge, quarrellings, fightings, &c. These sinnes of *David* did multiply his sorrows, for he watered his couch with teares:

Jer. 13. 10
Hosea. 4.

a vworld of finnes must needs have a Sea of teares to vvash them avway, as *David* did ; for upon his true repentance, Gods favour vvvas aftervvards proportionable to his sorrovvs.

Ezek.3.

And if it be so heinous and horrible a sinne to shed the blood of the body, and to kill the body ; if murdering of the body (I say) be so heinous, vvhat shall become of Soul-murderers, that shed the blood of poor souls ? It is ten thousand times more grievous, as the soul is far more vvorth then the body ; and if he shall perish, and is vvorthy to dye that murders the body ; how much more is he vvorthy to dye, that sheds the blood, not of one, but of many a poor soul ? And such be all those, that either teach not the vvord of God at all, or teach it negligently, they be Soul-murderers, and shall give a just account for it one day.

Use.3.

We see that no man, though never so great, can go free from Gods Judgments for a murther. *David* vvvas a great King, a man that vvvas above all mens Lavvs, yet the consci-

ence

ence of his sinne accused him, and he could have no rest, till he had got the pardon of it : So as we see the great force of man's conscience, though he could escape all the judgements of men, yet the conscience will accuse till God do clear him : and this we may see in many men, who being guilty of this sin, although they have by money, or friends, got pardon and freedome by the Law of man ; yet if God touch them for it, they can never have peace till they have bewailed this sin, and got the pardon from God ; but some of them even pine and languish away, and never look up all their dayes, such is the conscience of murder, and shedding innocent blood, that he may flye a thousand miles, he may be a great man, a King, that no man dare call him to account, yet he carries that in his bosome which will dog him and pursue him, neither shall he find rest, till he have repented, and be reconciled to God by the blood of Christ.

Here is matter of comfort and consolation for all such as have been great

V

and

Esa. 66.

24.

Mat. 9. 45

Pf. 49. 3.

45. 6, 7.

Dolt. 2.

God

hath

mercy

for such

as seek

mercy.

and grievous sinners, notorious wicked livers, that if they can repent, be humbled, bewaile their sins, beg pardon, the Lord will shew them mercy.

David here found favour for the pardon of his bloody finnes, adultery, and murder, upon his true repentance: so *Peter* for his grievous and hainous sin; and *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom were cast seven Devils, was saved; *Lot*, though he committed incest with his owne Daughters, yet found favour at Gods hands; so as we see great sinners, if they unfeignedly repent, shall find great mercy.

This is warranted from the Lords own mouth, *Es. 1. 18. Though your finnes were as Crimson, they shall be made as white as snow; though they were as red as Scarlet, they shall be as Wool: And again, Esay 44. & 22 ver. I have put away thy transgressions like a cloud, and thy finnes like a mist, Esay 33. 24. and Esay 43. 25. Ier. 31. 31.*

Is. 1.

Let every one of us listen to this Doctrine; hast thou been a notorious wicked liver, a miserable sinner, a common drunkard, a filthy liver, a

most

most vile and notorious blasphemer,
a thief, or robber? Hast thou hated
and persecuted God's Ministers, and
his dear Children; and contemned
the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ?
Well, loe if thou canst truly repent,
confesse thy grievous sinne, bewaile it,
cry to God for mercy and pardon of
it, the Lord will shew thee mercy,
for no sin, though never so great, can
sever thee, and cut thee off from me-
ry, if thou hast grace to repent, and
beg the pardon of it: And therefore,
though thy sins have been many and
great, Adultery, Murther, &c. take
heed thou despairest not with Cain,
so say, *My sin is greater then can be
forgiven*: but repent with David, and
God will pardon it.

Let no man presume hereupon to
sinne, because God will pardon great
sinnes: For as it is true that God will
pardon great sinnes, when men repent
truly of them, so without repen-
tance there is no pardon of the least
sinne; and if thou shalt wittingly and
willingly run into great sinnes, it is a
great doubt that thou shalt never or

Isa. 1. 16
18.

Vse 2.

Rom. 2. 4

Doct. 4.

The punishment
of sinne
should
terrific
us from
sinning.

2 Sam. 10

hardly get out of them : He that sins because God is mercifull, doth abuse his mercy, and then his mercy shall be turned into judgement: Gods mercy, should lead us to repentance, and not make us bold to sin.

Seeing *David* prayes and intreats the Lord, not onely to deliver him from sinne, but also from the punishment due to his sinne, the curse of God which was due to his grievous finnes of Adultery and Murther; as the Prophet told him, because he had done this evill, *The Sward shall never depart from his house, and his own Sons should defile his Wives*; We learn in regard of Gods fearfull judgements, Plagues and punishments that attend and wait upon sinne, men ought to be affraid to commit sin against God; for sure it is, that the curse follows sin, and as sin growes, so growes the curse; For the Lord is a just God, and must needs punish the transgressors of his Law: And although, as yet he takes not his loving kindnesse from them, neither suffers his truth to faile; yet he will visit their transgressions

sions with the Rod, and their sinnes with scourges, as we may see here by the example of *David*, of the people of *Israel*, Judges the 4. Chap the first & second verses: of *Miriam*, Num. 12. Of *Solomon*, *Asa*, *Jehosaphat*, *Josiah*, *Hezekiah*, &c. If then we break and do not observe his Statutes, and keep not his Commandements, when he searcheth with lights, and findeth out our sinnes, we must with *Achan*, give the glory to God and make confession unto him; we must pronounce righteousness to belong unto him, and unto our selves open shame and confusion of faces for ever.

Well then, let us remember this, if we sin, certainly the Lord will plague us, and punish us, either in our body, or soul, goods, or good name, Wife or Children, the Lord will find us out, we cannot escape his judgements, we cannot hide or cloake our sinnes from him; if men could be perswaded of this, Oh they would be affraid to lie and continue in sinne, if they thought God were a just God to torment them, and plague them for their

Use I.

finnes : How darest thou sin , if thou couldest be perswaded of this , that God will certainly plague thee ? Indeed the mercy of God should make us loath to sin, but if that will not, yet let his justice terrifie and fright all secure and carelesse sinners.

Use 2.

*Rev. 30.
14.*

Note.

Let no man sooth himselfe , to think he shall escape. If any man hear the curses of God's Law against sinne, and shall blesse himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall have peace although I walke after the stubbo-nesse of my heart ; then the Lord will not be mercifull unto that man , but the wrath of the Lord and his jealousie shall smock against him, and he shall bring upon him every curse written in his Law, to root him clean out : *I will visit those that be frozen in their dregs, and say in their hearts, God will neither do good nor evill : and if neither the mercy of God will move us, nor his judgements make us affraid to commit sinne, our case is fearfull and dangerous.*

Use 3.

Lastly, seeing God chasteneth his owne Children when they offend, then

then it must needs follow, that the wicked, which are none of his, shall not escape his revenging hand: if the Lord be severe against sinners, that he will not spare, no, nor the sins that fall to his own dear Children, being of his owne household, and Citizens of his owne Kingdome, and the members of his owne body: if the Lord do deal so sharply with these, Oh how heavy will he lay his judgements upon the wicked? *1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. The time is come, that judgement must begin at the house of God: if it first begin with us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked & sinner appear?* But God correcteth the godly in mercy, the wicked in wrath, the one as a Loving Father, the other as a Just Judge. Oh that all wicked and ungodly men would lay this to heart, and know that assured Judgement is reserved for them, at the great day of the Lords generall Assize, when they shall, will they, nill they, plead guilty at Gods Barre, where the Register

Doct. 4

True
note of a
penitent
to aggra-
vate his
sins.

book of all their Actions, shall be brought forth, and they shall receive according to their works:

In that *David* speaks in the plurall number, *Deliver me from blood*, that my most heinous, horrible, and cruell sin: He doth not mince it, or lessen it, but sets it out in colours, a bloody sin, a monstrous sinne. Therefore in true repentance and confession of our sinnes, we must labour to expresse them to the full, and make room enough to beat our Consciences; to make our hearts smart, and feel the weight and circumstances, by aggravating them: to set them out, to make them appear as vile and filthy as we can. For thereby we shew our grief, and hatred for them; as the Church of God did, in the ninth of *Daniel*, who confessed her sins, not lightly, but with wonderfull and great aggravation, in heaping up one thing on another; and as St. *Austin* did, [who for a small offence, as we account of it in our time and dayes, for robbing of an Orchard or Garden of some Peares or Apples, or such like fruit, as in his

second

second Book of his Confessions, the fourth Chapter, doth appear, how he doth aggravate his sin in weighing all the circumstances.

First, he saith, this Theft which I committed, was not onely in the Law of the Lord forbidden, but by man too; and I had it in my intention and thoughts daily, and did remember that it was a sin, and yet did it.

Secondly, I wilfully resolved to do it, what ere should come of it; and yet I did it.

Thirdly, I did it not for want, but in disdain of Piety, and likewise out of an envious mind, to injure others.

Fourthly, I had in my owne ground, great store of the same fruit; nay, better too.

Fifthly, I did steal not so much to delight in the act, as mine own theft: that I might say with my old companions, that I and they had rob'd such an Orchard, at such a time.

Sixthly, that there were in my company a number of desperate youths, and incarnate devils to egge me on.

Seventhly, he saith, that be ore
V 5 they

they went, or thought of this Action, they had been a drinking, sporting, and dancing.

Eighthly, we in a covetous manner, after we had eaten our bellies full, did carry all away.

Ninthly, we carried so many away, that they were a heavy burthen to us.

Tenthly, when we came to our abode, we gave them to the Hogges, and abused the Creatures of God by wantonnesse, and excesse; and then he concludes, and cryes out, *O my Creator, O my God, behold my heart; I beseech thee to shew pity and compassion upon me; anneint my wounds with the oyle of mercy, restore me my sight, cloath my nakednesse, enrich me that am poore, strengthen me that am weak, help me that am false.* And thus did David, which is the parry meant in my Text, cry out and say, *Deliver me from blood-guiltinesse, Oh God, the God of my salvation.*

This condemneth most men, who when they are told of their sinnes, do seek to cloak and excuse them,

to make them little sins of great sins, if they could well: it is a signe of a naughty heart, as we see in *Saul*, who would not confesse his sinne, but excuse it: it shewes men are not humbled nor grieved, have no hatred of it: but if we do truly see the loathsomenesse of sin, Oh we would aggravate it, yea, speak as bad as we can of it, and not excuse it in any case. The second thing in the Perition is the manner of it, namely, that he doth pray in faith and affiance of God's mercy; for he prayes unto God, and describes him to be the God of his salvation, because he puts all his affiance in God's mercy for Salvation, and acknowledgeth it to be the gift of God.

In that, *David* thus prayeth for the pardon of his sins with Faith and affiance, we learn, that if we desire to obtain our Requests, we must pray to God with faith and affiance in God's mercy; for at the same time, that God toucheth a poor sinner to mourn for his sins, and to repent, he gives him faith to pray to him with affiance

2 Sam. 19.

Doct. 5.
Faith required in prayer.

Iam. 5.6.

Heb. 11.

12. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

affiance for pardon and salvation. So then we see, whatsoever we aske at Gods hands, we must aske in Faith: *If any lack wisdom, let him aske in faith and waver not: for he that wavers can have no hope to obtain at Gods hands.*

Whosoever doubteth whether God will grant his Requests, or not, can never pray for any thing earnestly and effectually. This our Saviour teacheth, *Mark 11. 24. Whatsoever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you.* And none can have this assurance, that God is ready to hear them, and to grant their requests, but onely the faithfull, who have first this assurance that their sins are pardoned, and that they are reconciled unto God in Christ Jesus.

Use 1st

How should this move us all to labour to get saving Faith, that so we might pray in Faith, and obtain our requests, pardon of sinnes, wisdom, the gifts of Gods Spirit, &c. For he that comes in unbelief, can look for no mercy at Gods hands:

An 11

And therefore the prayer of many unbelievers, ignorant souls, : (alas) they be but babblings, and can do no good. Oh then let us labour to be able to say, My God, give me this or that.

This must teach us to moderate our desires, and take heed we aske not any thing that is not warranted by the Word; for unlesse it be warranted by the Word, we cannot have any assurance he will heare us; For there is no faith without the Word; and therefore when we shall aske things at our owne lust and pleasure, it is just with Almighty God not to hear us.

When David calls the Lord, *My God, and the God of my salvation*, he acknowledgeth that salvation, pardon of sins, life, and all good things come from God, and are his gracious gifts in Christ.

It is He who at the first gave us life, when we were stark dead in trespasses and sins; It is he again that keeps our souls in life; if we fall, he raiseth us up; when we wander, he recallereth us

Doff. 6.
Praise of
our sal-
vation,
properly
belongs
to God.

us from judgements past, present, and to come : he hath, doth, and will deliver us ; so that he may well be called *The God of our Salvation.*

Use 1.

Rom. 3. 2

Let us then acknowledge this, that all the good things we enjoy, the favour of God, pardon of our sinnes, Justification, Sanctification, Redemption, &c. All these are the free mercies and gifts of God in Christ, and then we shall learn to depend on God for the comforts of this life ; For we know that God hath given us Christ, and delivered us from sin, death, Hell ; How then can he deny us the lesser things for this life ?

Use 2.

Rom. 8.

Dan. 9.

Iob 42. 6.

Eph. 2.

Seeing salvation is the gift of God, we see that the Doctrine of the Papists is erroneous, who teach men that they may merit salvation, and mercy at Gods hands, pardon of sin, salvation and life eternall. *David* acknowledgeth it to be the free gift of God, and therefore let us abhor their Doctrine, and our own goodnesse, or worthiness, and acknowledge, that all we may enjoy for salvation, it is the free and undeserved favour of God in Christ Jesus.

David

David, he felt now the heavy weight of God's anger, which pressed him down exceedingly, and brake his heart: Yet withall, he had some feeling of the mercy of God, which made him bold to go to God for pardon, so that he could call him my God. Wherein we may note the difference of God's children from Infidels, that have no faith: The child of God, although he be touched at the quick, with the feeling of God's displeasure, yet he can by faith go to his Father, and make his moan unto him; but a wicked man, that hath no faith in Christ, he conceiveth nothing but God's anger and judgement, and therefore flies from him; and cannot give one rap at Gods mercy-seat, cannot for his life say, and confesse, *My God, my Father*, but is glad to runne from God as *Adam* did, and so in time to despire, as *Cain* and *Judas* did; for there is no doubt, if they had repented; but they had been forgiven.

It is observed of *Abraham*, that when he prayed to the Lord for the City

Note.

City Sodom, thit Abraham gave over asking before God gave over granting. Therefore I say, let not the multitude of our sinnes, and offences be a means to deter, and hinder our repentance: for if it do, it will be our destruction in the end: but let our tongues sing of thy Righteousnesse.

And my tongue shall sing of thy Righteousnesse.

THese words containe, in them the reasons of his requests; as if he should say, If thou shalt, Oh Lord, pardon my offences, and in mercy deliver me from the curse and punishment due to me for them, my tongue shall be a Preacher and a publisher of thy mercy unto others. *And my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.* By Righteousnesse is not meant here the justice of God, whereby he takes vengeance for sin; but by righteousness is meant the mercifull dealing of God, in keeping promise with all repentant sinners, in pardoning and remitting their offences, and receiving them to mercy.

It

It is impossible for any man or woman, who have truly tasted of Gods mercy in Christ for life and salvation, to keep it in as it shall not break forth and appear; but he that hath his heart affected with Gods mercy in Christ, it will untie his tongue to relate of it, and to praise God for it. As it is not possible to keep fire so close, but it will smoke and flame in time: So the feeling of Gods love cannot but flame out and appear to the comfort of others.

Welly, by the rule of this Doctrine, we may see that few have their hearts affected with the mercy of God in Christ, because they seldome or never take occasion to speak of it, and to praise God for it. The poor Leper finding himselfe to be cleansed, came to praise God for it; and Naaman would give Elisha a reward, but our hearts have no comfort in them; therefore we open not our hearts to praise God.

And my tongue.

Observe how David speaks, that as in heart he will laud God, so

Doct. 7.
Gods
mercies
must un
tie our
Tongues
to praise
him.

Luk. 22.

23.

Chr. 19.

Act. 11.

18.

1 thes. 2.

Luke 17.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

2 Cor. 13.

James 3.

in words he will praise him. Of all the parts of a man's body, the tongue onely serveth and ought to honour God, and to praise him. That serveth to unfold the truth of God, to blesse Him, to praise Him, and to instruct others.

Well, seeing that God hath of all members of the body, ordained the Tongue to be that member whereby we shall honour and praise Him; let us govern our tongue so, as it may serve to open his will, to praise and laud Him, to speak of his wondrous works: let us use it well in Prayer, in speaking of God's mercy and judgement to instruct others: and in any case let us set a watch before our mouths, that we sin not in speeches: *If any man sin not in his tongue, he is a perfect man.*

James 3.

Doct. 8.
GODS
righte-
ousnesse
what it
is.

Of thy righteousness.

David calls God's faithfulness and truth in keeping promise to repentant sinners, *His Righteousnesse*: wherein note a wonderfull comfort to all repentant sinners, that God avoucheth he shall be un-

just

just, and unrighteous, if he should not give them mercy and pardon when they repent, seeing he hath tyed himselfe by his promise; So as if he should not shew them mercy, he should be unjust, and deny himselfe, and be no God.

Note.

Well then, let this provoke every man to repent, and turn to God: For if thou dost bewaile thy sins, and beg pardon, thou maist challenge it at God's hand, urge him with his promise, and he can no more deny thee mercy, than he can deny himselfe, for he will pardon repentant sinners. And this me-thinks should move all sinners to repent, seeing the Lord is true of his Word, and cannot deny the mercy, unlesse he should deny himselfe, and so be unjust, which is impossible; for he is true of his Word.

V E R S E



VERSE XV.

*Open thou my lips, O Lord, and my
mouth shall shew forth thy praise.*

David having sundry times prayed, and preferred many requests unto God for grace and mercy for pardon of his sinne; In the 13. and 14. Verses he useth a reason drawn from his thankfulness, which he will shew unto God, in labouring to set forth his glory, in being a faithfull and zealous Preacher of Gods mercy unto others, to draw them unto God.

But here in this Verse, David finding and feeling his mouth as it were fast stopped, and his lips tyed up, by reason of his sinnes, and the feeling of Gods anger, intreateth him to open his lips again, and to give him matter of praise and thanksgiving.

Open thou my lips.

AS if he should say, Oh Lord, I confesse that my sinnes, and the great grieve I have conceived for them, by the sense and feeling of thy displea-

displeasure hath stopped my mouth,
so as I am not able to preach thy mer-
cy, and to praise thee as I desire: now
then, I beseech thee Lord, to take
from me that sorrow and extremity
of grief, pardoning my finnes, and re-
ceiving me into favour, that I may
have mercy ministred unto me, to
praise thy name for the pardon of my
sins: deliver me O most gracious Fa-
ther from thy wrath, and eternall dam-
nation.

So long as the conscience doth ac-
cuse for sinne, and men are not assured
of God's love in Christ, poor souls,
they cannot so much as once open
their mouths, and move their tongues
and lips to praise God with any sound
comfort: For how can a condemned
man do this, that can find nothing
but Hell in his conscience, and trouble
of mind? No, thy sinne and grief for
sinne, and fear of Gods wrath will stop
thy mouth: Let any man make tryall
of his owne heart, and he shall find
this true by his owne experience, that
the guiltinesse of sin, and accusation
of conscience, for fear of God's an-
ger,

Doct. I.
Sin takes
away the
use of the
Tongue,
that man
cannot
praise
God
as he
should.

er, will stop a man's mouth, so as he shall not be able to open his mouth with comfort to praise the Almighty.

Yea, although a man be elected, called, and sanctified, the dear child of God, a sound Christian; yet when he shall fall into sinne, Adultery, Murther, &c. when the poor conscience is now upon the Rack, he shall feel a Hell for the present, he shall find his mouth stopped, so as where he could before praise God thankfully, and comfortably, and call on his Name, yea, he would be a meanes to stirre up others, yet after the committing of sinne, and accusing of Conscience, he shall find his lips tyed up, and his mouth stopped for the present time. No power, nor will to praise Almighty God: No, but this will sound often and loud in thy ears: *What hast thou to do, to declare my Ordinance, and to take my name in to thy mouth?* So that a poor sinner in distresse, and feeling the conscience to accuse for some sinne, and fearing God's displeasure, shall fear even

PK 6. 51.

to

to name and mention the name of the Almighty.

Seeing this is the wofull and bitter fruit of sinne, against Knowledge and Conscience, even to stop our mouths, and to tye up our tongues, so as we shall not be able once to open our lips to praise G O D with comfort; How should this make us exceeding affraid of sinne, to commit it, to be affraid of offending God, and wounding our Consciences, so as we shall not dare to mention the name of God. We see, they which be near to the King, or great Persons, if they know any thing that offend them, so as they shall not endure in their presence, they will be carefull to shun and avoid it. Well, sin is of that nature, that it will make us affraid once to mention the Name of God, but with Reverence, and ashamed to come before him, and quake to call upon him.

If thou canst now call upon God with comfort, and praise him cheerfully with peace of Conscience: Oh make much of it, and take heed of sin and.

Use 1.

Use 2.

and disobedience, for that will be a means for to stop the mouth of thy Conscience, and cause thee that thou shalt not be able to open thy mouth to praise the Lord.

Use 3.

We see here, that all the praises that ungodly men offer unto God, they be but as desperate Songs of a condemned man; as if one arraigned and condemned of Treason, should sing and make himselfe merry, when he is at death's door, it is but mad mirth; *Is any man merry, let him sing*

Iam. 4.

Psalms: is any sat, let him pray. So then, seeing wicked men live in sin and in danger of God's vengeance, Hell, and Damnation, it were better for them to weep, and wring their hands, as *Howl and weep ye rich men.*

Iam. 4. 9.

So if ungodly men knew all, and saw God's vengeance hanging over them, Hell-fire gaping for them, and the Devill leading them blind-fold to the place of perdition, they would change all their mirth into lamentation, and mourning; for so long as thou livest in sinne, without assurance of God's mercy in Christ, alas, thou

hast

thast no power to open thy lips , or
to move thy tongue to praise the
Lord.

If *David* could not of himselfe
open his mouth to praise God , but
the Lord must unlock them by the
Key of the Spirit , and put his finger
into his mouth, and say, *Ephata* hence
we learn , that it is not in the power
of man to keep the Law of God , to
merit heaven and salvation by his own
goodnesse and deserts : For if a man
have not in his power , so much as to
open his lips, how much lesse to per-
form the Law , and so to merit Hea-
ven and salvation ? No, a man cannot
of himselfe think a good thought , but
the Lord must cause both the will and
the deed.

It serves to pull down the pride
of mens hearts : for by nature we are
given to think well of our selves , to
admire our own goodness and worthi-
nesse, and our own gifts, as if we could
perform great matters : and yet (alas)
we are not able to open our lips, but
by Gods help : but if God have gi-
ven thee any gift or power to do , or

X

speake

Dost. 2.

No ability
in man
to per-
form any
good.

Vse 1.

Speak well, be not proud of it : *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* Oh then , why art thou proud of it ? well , let us acknowledge whence we received all, and give God the glory.

Use 1.

This condemnes the erroneous doctrine of the Papists , who so much justifie man's free will and goodnesse, that he being but helped by grace a little , is able to keep the Law, yea to merit salvation and life eternall : But if thou canst not by thine owne power so much as move thy lips , or open thy mouth , how can they with all their goodnesse keep the Law , and so merit salvation.

Use 2.

Seeing the motion of the lips, and so of the whole body , is of God, and no man can speak a word but by the power of God , nor say, *Christ is the Lord* , but by the power of the Ho'y Ghost; *yea, in him we live, move, and have our being* : Oh then how should we be most carefull to speak and do , so as God hath glory : for unlesse the Lord give thee power, thou canst not move thy finger , nor thy tongue , or once open thy lips.

if the Lord deny thee his favour, and withhold his power, as in that wicked *Jeroboam*, when he would have slain the Prophet of God for crying out against his sins, the Lord smote his hand, that it withered, and he could not pull it in again. Well, let us all take heed how we use and abuse our tongues, lest the Lord in justice do make them cleave to the roof of our mouths for the same.

The second part of the verse contains a solemn Protestation of *David*, that if the Lord shall thus shew him mercy, in pardoning his sinne, and receiving him into favour again, that then he will be most willing and ready to praise God, and to publish his mercy and goodnesse, whereby the Lord shall reape much glory.

Hereby we see, what it is that God requires at our hands, for all the mercies he bestowes upon us. Namely, praise and thanksgiving, that we should speak of Gods mercies, seek to honour him, and to be thankfull for his blessings. This *David* shewes

2. Part of
the verse.

Doct. 3
Thanksgiving a
necessary
duty.

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if the Lord deny thee his favour, and with hold his power, as in that wicked *Jeroboam*, when he would have slain the Prophet of God for crying out against his sins, the Lord smote his hand, that it withered, and he could not pull it in again. Well, let us all take heed how we use and abuse our tongues, lest the Lord in justice do make them cleave to the roof of our mouths for the same.

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2. Part of
the verse.

Doff. 3
Thank-
giving a
necessary
duty.

Psa. 116.

more plainly ; *What shall I give unto the Lord for all his benefits ? I will take the cup of salvation , and call upon the name of the Lord.* Where he shewes that all that God looks for at our hands, is praise and thanksgiving : So the Lord himselfe having rehearsed his great blessings unto his people, saith thus. *O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear him, to love him , and to walk in his wayes ?* where he shewes , wherein stands our true thankfulnesse ; namely, not onely in word to acknowledge his mercy, but in life to fear him, love him, call upon him, trust in him , and keep his Commandements.

Deut. 10.
12.

Use 1.

Seeing this is all the Lord requires for his great and continuall blessings and mercies , for our souls and bodies, namely Thankfulnesse , acknowledging his love and mercy, and praising him for the same , let us labour with our owne hearts to give the Lord praise , to acknowledge his mercy and goodnesse bestowed upon us : *It is a comely thing to be thankful.*

Psa. 103.

And

And that we may the better be stirred up to perform this worthy duty of praising God, let us consider both the greatnesse and continuance of Gods blessings bestowed upon us, as *David* did, *Forget not all his benefits, who gave thee pardon of thy sins, &c.* So let us bethink our selves of Gods love and mercy to us: First, in electing us to be the Sons of God, in delivering us from Hell and Damnation, in redeeming us by the death and blood-shedding of his own Sonne, in preserving us from so many dangers, in feeding us, and cloathing us, and all the rest of his blessings for this life, and that which is to come. O if we could thus bethink our selves of the number, greatnesse, and continuance of Gods mercies, how could we be so unkind to forget, or to be unthankfull for his blessings? We see, if a friend do us a pleasure, though it be but a meals meate, we will be thankfull for it, relate of it, but if he shall be a means to save our life, as from sword, fire, water, and the like; O then will we go on our hands and

X 2 knees

Pl. 33.1.

knees to do him good : Well, God is our best friend , and we are most beholden unto him , yea, more than to all the World ; and therefore let us labour with our owne hearts to be thankfull ; and because many can purpose to give God thanks in words, and with their lips , let us know it is not enough in words to praise God, and say , *Thanks be to God* ; but we must labour in life to shew our thankfulness, when as we labour to honour God, when as we seek to do his Will, and to serve Him , and are loth to offend so mercifull and bountifull a God. For if a man shall make shew in words, that he is gratefull, and yet live in sin , there is no thankfull heart in him. And that we may the better be stirred up to do this , let us know there is no better way to move the Lord , to continue his love and mercy unto us , than when we do freely acknowledge his mercy , and are thankfull for it ; As we see , if we give a small thing to a poor body , if they be thankfull, to speak of it, and to confesse it , it will provoke us to do them great

great favours, and say; Alas he is thankfull, it is well bestowed on him, he is worthy of a better turn: So as to be thankfull for one good turne, is to crave another: And therefore let us remember this duty, it is comely, it is all the Lord requires of us, and is the way to procure a new mercy at Gods hands.

Let us then take heed of that foule fault of unthankfulnesse, when as men can be content to devour Gods mercies from day to day, and never render him any thanks; like the sow under the Tree, eates the Akorns, and never looks whence they come: So many wicked men devour the mercies of God, and never open their mouthes, like unto the nine Lepers, whereof not one returned back to praise God.

The causes of unthankfulnesse: first men consider not the greatnesse, number, and continuance of Gods mercies; and therefore they imagine themselves more beholden to a naturall man for a meales mear, than to God for all his mercies.

Use 2.

Luk. 17.

Causes of unthankfulnesse.

Pl. 103. 2.

Secondly, forgetfulness of his mercies, when men let them passe away, and never be affected with them.

Thirdly, the hardnesse of mans heart which is not roused nor affected with the great blessings of God.

Well, let us beware of this sinne, which is so odious, that the Heathen men would rather be accused of any sin, than this sin of ungratefulnesse.

Secondly, by ungratefulnesse we deprive our selves of many other mercies; for as gratefulnesse for an old, is the beginning of a new, so ungratefulnesse for an old favour, is the next way to deprive us of a new.

 VERSE XVI.

*For thou desirest no Sacrifice; else
 would I give it thee; &c.*



He Prophet David having professed that it was his earnest desire to honor God, to praise him, and seek his glory; Confesseth that he hath no other means, but to speak of his mercy, and to be willing to set forth the same:

To

To become a Preacher of his righteousness and goodnesse. And he confesseth (to his comfort) that the Lord is more delighted with this , than with all those externall ceremonies, and sacrifices, which the people of the *Jewes* did offer , and thought by them to please God, and to assuage his anger , and procure pardon of their sins thereby.

So that the main scope of these two Verses is this, to shew *David*, though he had nothing in the World to requite the Lords mercy unto him ; yet he perswaded himselfe , upon his true repentance, the Lord will accept of his earnest desire to honour him , and to set forth his praise.

In the 16 verse he shewes, what are those sacrifices which the Lord cares not for , and desireth not outward sacrifices alone, which men offer without faith and repentance , and whereby they think to appease his anger, and merit pardon of their sins by the same.

In the 17 verse he shewes, what are the best sacrifices we can offer unto
X 5 God,

God , which he will except of for Christs sake , and therewith he is well pleased : *A broken and contrite heart* , truly wounded and humbled for sin , and which doth by faith embrace Jesus Christ , who alone is the propitiatory sacrifice to appease his fathers anger , and to work our attonement and reconciliation with God.

Thou desirest no Sacrifice.

Sacrifices of the Jew of two sorts.

THe Sacrifices of the *Jews* were of two sorts, some propitiatory, to procure favour at Gods hands for the pardon of sin; some gratulatory, which were onely for thanksgiving for blessings received : Now of these *David* speaks here especially.

And of Sacrifices for thanksgiving were two sorts , some were called Sacrifices , as the first word signifies, where some Beast was slain and offered in Sacrifice to God.

Again , some were called Burnt-offerings , which were all consumed and turned into ashes , and they were called so, because the smoke of them ascended up to Heaven : and both of them

them were figures of Christ Jesus, who should be slain, and burned, as it were in the fire of Gods anger for our sins.

Quest. But how can the Lord be said, not to desire burnt-offerings and sacrifices, seeing he commanded them in his Law?

Ans. We may not think the Prophet speaks here simply, that the Lord cares not for Sacrifices: for as yet the ceremonies of the Law were in force, and the greatest parts of Gods worship stood in Sacrifices; and *David* himselfe, and *Solomon* were diligent, and not sparing in performing this duty.

But we must know *David* speaks here, First, that the Lord careth not for Sacrifices, as they were done of the common people of the *Jewes*, because that, whereas the Lord did ordain them, as helps to lead them to Christ, that they might deny themselves, & see they were worthy to dye, when the beast was slain; so they might see to be saved by the everlasting sacrifice of Christ alone: But they began

began to imagine that by their very offering of beasts in Sacrifice : God was pleased , never looking to Christ Jesus, whereof they are but Types and Figures.

1er. 7.

Secondly, because the people of the *Jewes* did offer them without faith and Repentance , with impenitent hearts ; and thought so long as they offered Sacrifice, though they lived in sin, it skilled not.

Thirdly, the Lord delights not, nor is not so well pleased with this outward Sacrifice , as with a broken and contrite heart, when this is humbled and mourns for sin , believes in Christ Jesus, and is carefull to honour God by his holy life.

Dof. 6.

A mans person must first be approved before his Sacrifice be accepted.

Le. 24. 20

Ps. 29. 13

Mat 15.

Seeing *David* affirmeth , that God cares not for outward Sacrifice, when the inward is wanting : We learn, that though a man should perform all the outward service and worship of God , and that in never so glorious a manner, yet if the heart be not affected and purified, all is in vain, the Lord cares not for it : as to preach the word, to hear it, to receive the Sacrament.

ment, &c. If there be not a broken heart for sin, a repentant heart, a sanctified heart, all is but vaine. The Scribes and Pharisees seemed marvelous precise in outward shew, very zealous and forward, yet their hearts were puffed up with pride, selfe-love, malice, covetousnesse, &c. And therefore Christ saith, *Unlesse your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Judas in outward shew preached and prayed as well as others, yet a very Devill, a most traiterous wretch, full of hypocrisie, covetousnesse, and bloody cruelty. Well, we see, though men make never so good and faire a shew, yet if the heart be not sound, all is in vaine, and from the teeth outward, and God cares not for it, he esteemes as much of their sacrifices, as if they should kill a man, or sacrifice a dog, which is abomination to the Lord.

This may serve to cut the combs of all those which be proud hypocrites, and all they do is in outward appearance: alas, their praying, preaching,

Mat. 5.
10.

Eccl. 66.3.

Use 1.

Pro. 26.9
Pl. 50.16

preaching, hearing, it is but Swines blood, Dogges blood, a beautifull abomination! and therefore let us never content ourselves with the outward worship and service of God, but let us labour to do all in truth, with faith, obedience, repentance, humiliation, and good conscience.

Use 2.

This condemnes all the blind devotions, of ignorant and prophane sinners, who think that so long as they offer their outward sacrifices, come to Church, heare the Word, receive the Sacrament, &c. they may live in sin, and yet please God; And this was the very cause, why the Lord abhorred the *Jemes* sacrifices. And may not the Lord even now abhorre our Sacrifices, our comming to Church, Hearing, Praying, &c. Seeing men do content themselves with outward actions, and come with sinfull hearts and affections?

Ec. 1.11,
12, 13.
Ier. 7.8.

Doff. 2.

A man
may perform a
good duty and
yet sin in the manner of
doing it.

We learn hence, that a man may perform duties which God hath commanded, and yet not please God, but sinne most grievously in doing of them: To offer Sacrifice, it is Gods owne

owne Commandement, but when people shall do it in an evill manner, either without faith and Repentance, or else to an evill end, to merit at Gods hands, then it maketh that which God commands to be a sin to them, not in it selfe, but to them that faile in the manner of doing it. To offer Sacrifice was the Commandement of God, but when the *Jewes* thought by their sacrifices to appease Gods anger without the sacrifice of Christ, they sinned, and God abhorred them, and cared not for them. Again, to preach the Word of God, is his Commandement: but when *Judas* shall preach the Word, to hide his coverousness and treacherous heart, it is a sin in *Judas*. To give our almes, it is a thing commanded, and a sacrifice wherewith God is well pleased: but if men shall give to merit, and to be seen of men, the Lord careth not for it. So as we see a man may do things which God commands men to do, and yet be so far from pleasing God, that they shall sin, and provoke him to anger, because they do them not in an holy

Pro. 25.

11.

Vse 1.

holy order, in faith, Repentance, obedience, and zeal of the Lords glory.

This condemnes almost the whole service of God amongst the Papists, who do all to this end, to merit and deserve at Gods hands pardon for sin, and freedome from punishment; but this is to a wrong end: we must do good deeds, not to merit, but to honour God, to give good example, and to make our calling sure to our selves.

Vse 2.

This must admonish us all, not only to do that God commands, as to preach the Word, hear, pray, receive the Sacrament, &c. but to do it as God commands; or else he abhors all we do, unlesse we do them in Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, all is in vaine.

D.A.

Popish
Sacrifices
abhor-
nable.

If the Lord abhors those Sacrifices which he commands for mans offence, how much more those sinfull sacrifices which have been invented by man, without any warrant from his Word, as the Idol of the Masse, Popish Pilgrims, perpetuall chastity, voluntary, poverty, living in a Cloyster, &c.

Well

Well then, let us take heed, not only that we do not abuse those Sacrifices which the Lord commands, by our evill doing and performing of them; but much more, that we be not so bold at any time, to offer unto the Lord such sacrifices as are condemned in the Word of God; to offer with strange fire, as *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, and such as *Paul* calls *Wit-worship*; and Christ calls *The invention of men*, for these the Lord abhors.

Vse 1.

It condemnes that bloody and beastly sacrifice of the Papists, who offer in Masse Christ daily for the quick and dead, an horrible abuse of Christ Jesus: For Christ hath by his owne sufficient sacrifice of his body and blood on the Crosse, appeased his Fathers anger for the sinnes of the World, and put an end to all those sacrifices; and if they offer up Christ in the Masse for quick and dead, then Christ's Sacrifice was imperfect, that must be patched up with that abominable Idol.

Vse 2.

Concerning those sacrifices which were lambs, sheep, goats, or bullocks,
and

and were all slain and offered to God in fire, let us mark, that they were all so many Figures, Types, and shapes of that everlasting Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which he offered upon the Crosse in his own person.

Dost. 4.
Christi-
an end of
all other
sacrifices.

Then this doth commend unto us that blessed and most meritorious sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, seeing there were so many Prophecies of it, even from the beginning of the World, and so many shadows and Types of it, as cannot be numbred, because there never passed one day amongst the *Jewes*, from the time of the Law, till Christs comming, but they offered at least Morning and Evening sacrifice, as shadows of Christ Jesus to come; and the people of God, the believing *Jewes*, and holy Fathers, and Prophets, did in them behold Jesus Christ, as slain and crucified before their eyes. And as Christ saith, *The holy Patriarchs and Prophets, and famous Kings, desired to see my day, and would be glad to see, and yet saw it not.*

Vse 1.

Well, seeing the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ

Christ is so excellent and meritorious, of endlesse worth to procure Gods favour to us, how often should we think upon it, never let it depart out of our minds? And to this end, we should be more willing to approach and come to the Supper of the Lord, that so there, as it were in a plaine Table and Picture, and not painted on a wooden Crosse, as the Papists do, we might behold Christ crucified, and his blood shed for our finnes, so often as we see the Bread broken, the Wine powred out: *So often as ye do it, doe in remembrance of me, to shew forth my death till I come.*

Cor. 11.

For the remembrance of Christs sacrifice, it is a sweet comfort to all wounded and distressed souls: It is Sack and Sugar to all them that truly believe in him: it is an excellent means to kill sin, and to humble our hard hearts, that we should remember, our sins were as the bloody nails, and the Speare which put Him to death; and a powerfull bridle to restrain us from sin, because so often as we sinne, we do as it were pierce his heart

heart afresh : And as for those that
care not for comming to the Sacra-
ment, nor yet for the Word wherein
Christ is lively crucified, they shew
they have no benefit by this sacrifice of
Christ.



VERSE XVII.

The Sacrifices of God, are a contrite spirit. A contrite and broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

David having shewed what be those Sacrifices wherein the Lord hath no pleasure; namely, such as men shall offer with hope to merit, or without Faith, or Repentance.

Now he shewes what is the Sacrifice wherein the Lord takes great delight, and is well pleased, and that is in one word, *a broken spirit, a heart truly wounded for his sin.*

In this same verse let us first find out what is the broken and contrite spirit : Secondly, the commendations of it ; namely, it is called the *Sacrifice* of

of God. Thirdly, that *he doth not despise.*

By a broken and contrite spirit, is meant, such an heart as is truly humbled with the sight of sinne, wounded and pierced with the feare of Gods anger, grieved for offending so mercifull a God, and loving a Father, and doth begge for mercy at his hands, as for life and death, besides the endlesse mercy of God in Christ our Saviour, which breaketh the heart of a poor sinner.

So then there be two things that wound and bruise the hearts of sinners, first, the sight of sin and knowledge of our misery, by reason thereof: Secondly, the endlesse mercy of God in Christ, so as it cuts us at the heart, to remember that we have offended so good and mercifull a Father.

Seeing this is that broken heart, which is thus bruised with the sight of sin, and is humbled for them: Yea, hath a most low conceit of it selfe, as most vile and unworthy; we shall see that it is a most rare thing to be found,

Doct. 1.
Broken heart
most rare
thing to
be found.

Rev. 3.

14.

Ep. 4. 18.

found ; for generally men are so blinded with selfe-love , that they see nothing , or feele nothing to humble them , or bruiſe their ſtony hearts, but are like the Church of *Ephesus*. For this is ever a fellow of hardneſſe of heart : and cauſe of all ignorance of our miſery : Men are like thoſe that be ſick of a Lethargy , it is a deadly diſeaſe, and incurable. This hardneſſe of heart, it is the common judgement of God upon our people, it raignes every where. How often hath God knockt at the doors of our eyes by his judgements ? at the doors of our eares by his Juſtice ? at the doors of our heart by his Word and Commandements ? and we will not turn to him by our repentance , which if we do not, he then will turn us into Hell for our forgetfulneſſe : nor muſt we have qualmes of fits , or when we are offered time of piety and repentance, like a Weather-cock , turn to ſinne again , and be never at a certain, leſt we ſhould be condemned for ever , to Hell for our unconſtancy ; there.

therefore let us beseech the Lord,
that the time to come may be a
time for our repentance for our sinnes
past.

Seeing that this contrite heart is
so rare and hard to be found, and the
hard heart is so common, and so dan-
gerous a fore-runner of Hell: Oh let
us look to our selves, how we find
our hearts broken and bruised with
the sense of our sinnes, mourn for
them, and bewaile them. Alas it is
wonderfull to see poor souls, how
men lye in sin, see nothing, and feare
nothing, nor complain of nothing:
Men can complain of the stone in
the Reines, and cry out with grieve:
but no man complains of the stone
in the heart, they feel no such grief:
though it be deadly and dangerous:
And if thou findest thy heart hard-
ned, so as thou art not touched and
troubled with the sight of sinne, of
Gods vengeance, of Hell, and dam-
nation, that thou canst not mourn
for them, that thou fearest not Gods
iudgements, and are not affected with
his mercies, to mourn for thy sinnes:
Oh

Oh know thy estate is fearefull and miserable, thou art in extream danger to perish, and be damned for ever.

Ro. 2. 12.
Ps. 40. 12.

Seeing a hard heart is so fearfull a judgement of God, and fore-runner of Hell: Let us use all good meanes for the bruising of the heart, and to this end we must labour to know the Law of God, how we break it daily in thought, word, and deed; we must know the curse of God due to sin, *That the wages of sin is death:* and because the preaching of the Word. is the most excellent meanes to work this, and is the Lords hammer to crush in pieces our stony heart, let us attend that. And lastly, let us make much of Gods mercy in Christ, that so his mercy, patience, long-suffering, &c. may be a speciall means to bruise our hearts, that we have sinned against him.

Use 3.

Let us take heed of pride of heart, to think too well of our selves: for this is certain, where men and women think too well of themselves, there is a hardness of heart, and where hardness of heart is, there is pride of heart, for

for these two go not asunder; and the more proud, the more hard-hearted, and the more hard-hearted the more proud; and therefore if thy heart be humbled indeed, bruised for sin, there will follow a very low and base estimation of our selves, to think more basely and meanly of our selves, than any man can do.

1 Tim. 1.
15.

The second point is the praise and commendation of such a sacrifice: namely, that the Prophet doth not only call it the sacrifice of God, that is, most excellent, and such as God loves and likes; but also he calls it Sacrifices, in the plurall number, *The sacrifices of God*: For it is not in vain that he speaks in the plurall number, and the meaning is this, to shew that a heart broken and bruised for sin, is instead of all other sacrifices whatsoever; and let men offer what sacrifice they will, never so many, costly, or excellent, yet if this be wanting, it is but in vain, God esteems not of it; one broken heart is more worth than a thousand sacrifices of great price.

Y

Instruct.

Instruct.

THis may admonish every one to take heed, that we do not offer nor present the Lord with any other sacrifice but this, which is in stead of all, and more worth than a thousand offered by hard-hearted sinners, which are no better than hypocrites, and dissemblers with God, which makes a fair outward shew, and come like *Judas*, saying, *Hail Master*, onely to betray him, and undo their own souls, both in this life, and in the world to come. For if a man offer many sacrifices, pray much, preach much, hear much, receive the Sacrament often; yet if the heart be not broken, humbled, and bruised, alas, all is in vain, God esteems them as of no effect; we cannot please him without a broken and contrite spirit.

Secondly, wouldst thou offer unto God a most precious Sacrifice, that might be in stead of all the rest, and make all the rest acceptable? O then present him with this broken heart. The poor woman that cast in-

to the Treasury but two Mites, cast in more then all the rest, because it came from a heart truly humbled; and so if thou wouldest have thy praying; preaching, hearing, &c. please God, then present the Lord with a broken heart, which is in stead of all other sacrifices, and makes them all acceptable; and without this, all is abominable unto the Lord.

Thou wilt not despise.

That is, thou dost love, and like, and art well pleased with it; that is, with a broken heart, and contrite spirit.

Hence we learn, that God doth well and highly esteem of, and love that man or woman, which is of a broken and contrite heart; like *Josias*, whose heart is melted. When as the heart is broken with sight of sinne, and sense of God's anger, and withall dorth embrace Jesus Christ for pardon and forgiveness.

Here is matter of endlesse comfort to poor distressed soules, whose hearts are wounded and bruised for sin, melt and mourn for them, feel

Doct. 2.
God doth highly esteem of a broken heart.
2 King. 22. 19.
Luk. 19.
Esa. 66.
Es. 57. 5.

Use 1.

the burden of them, and bewail them; thou art dear unto God, he loves thee, and likes thee, and hath respect unto thee, and he will comfort thee, and deliver thee: Look on *Josias* that godly King, on the poor Publican, on *Mary Magdalen*, the *Canaanitish* woman, and on every child of God, how the Lord hath refreshed them in their distresse.

Seeing the Lord doth not despise a broken and contrite spirit, a distressed soul and wounded conscience, he will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax; then let no man or woman that is of a contrite spirit, be out of heart, as though the Lord hated them, and regarded them not; no, no, let them rather know, that the Lord loves them, and likes them, that they are dear unto him. It is a wonderfull comfort to God's poor children, Oh they find and feel the heavy weight of sin, and groan under it, so as they think the Lord loves them not, but rather hates them; truly it is not so, the Lord loves them, and they are more

more deat unto him. It is not a voluntary pilgrimage, nor a bald head, nor onely beating the breast will serve the turn, no, it must be sorrow and grief, a contrite and an humble spirit that the Lord doth accept of, and those are they which the Lord will not despise. As in *Esa. 57. 13.* God himself saith, *He will dwell in the humble and meek spirit, and will raise up that soul which is cast down, &c.*

Ps. 33. 1.



VERSE 18, & 19.

Be favourable unto Sion for thy good pleasure: build up the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt thou accept the sacrifice of righteousness, even the burnt-offering and oblation: Then shall they offer Calves upon thine Altar.

Hitherto we have heard of the first-part of this worthy Psalm, wherein David hath put up sundry Petitions and Requests unto God for the pardon of his sinnes, and turning away his fearfull Judgments.

The second part of the Psalm, containing a prayer for the Church.

Y 2

Now

Now in these two last Verses, *David* is mindfull of the Church and people of God ; and because he had by his finnes not onely endangered his owne soule , but also laid open the Church and people of God to great misery , and done what lay in him (as he was a King and Judge of the Land) to draw the curse and judgement of God upon them : Therefore he doth humbly entreat the Lord to be mercifull to his Church, and not to plague and punish them , as he might have done , both for his sins and disobedience.

These two verses contain in them two speciall points to be considered of us.

First , the Request which *David* makes , in behalfe of the Church and people of God , *vers. 18.*

Secondly , the Reason taken from the vow and protestation which *David* and the people make unto God , namely, to offer unto God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

In the Prayer be two Requests , first , he prayes for mercy and favour

to be shewed unto the Church of God.

Secondly, that the Lord would repair that breach which he had made by his sins.

Be favourable.

THat is, do well, bless, preserve, and shew mercy to *Sion*. *Sion* signifies that beautifull Temple of *Jerusalem*, but here it is taken for the Church and people of God; as if he should say, O Lord, I do not onely entreat thee, that thou wouldest have mercy upon me, but I beseech thee shew mercy to thy whole Church and people, who were plagued for *David's* sin. For you may read in the second Book of *Samuel*, when he saw the plague, he cryed out, O Lord, *what have these sheep done? lay the punishment upon me and upon my fathers house, rather then upon them; for they have done nothing.* Therefore he desires the Lord to be mercifull unto them, that his Word may be preached, and his name called upon: For I acknowledge, O Lord, that I have done as much as lay in my

Y 4 power,

power to bring heavy judgments upon thy Church and people, if any sins be laid upon them: But Lord, let not thy Spouse be punished for my sin, O be favourable unto Sion.

Ps. l. i.
Prayer
the chief-
est refuge
in the
time of
danger.

Ps. 122.
Ps. 60.
Ps. 107.
Hest. i. 8.
Esa. 64.
2 Chr. 32

Seeing David in time of misery, when the Church was in great danger of God's judgments, berakes himself to prayer, to entreat the Lord for grace and favour, we learn hence, That this is our chiefest refuge and shelter in time of misery and affliction, when the Church of God is in danger of any judgment or calamity, even to betake our selves to humble and earnest prayer: *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.* It is a great blessing for a Kingdom to enjoy peace; for peace on earth makes it like to heaven. And of the *Israelites* it is reported, that they cryed five times for peace unto the Lord in their distresse; so in *Egypt* they cried unto the Lord, so they fasted and prayed, when *Haman* had got the King's Letter to put the Jews to death.

The like we may see in *Nehemiah*,
Nehem.

Nehem. 1. 3. when he heard that the people returned from captivity were still in misery, *Jerusalem* trodden down, he sat down and wept, he mourned, fasted, and prayed before the Lord God of heaven, for the redresse of those evils. This appeareth likewise, *Psal. 137. 1, 2, 3.* where the Prophet liyeth plainly down the miserable estate of the Church under the *Babylonians*, and the afflictions of the Church conceived upon that distresse: *We sat down & wept when we remembered thee O Sion: If I forget thee (O Jerusalem) let my right hand forget her cunning; yea, if I prefer not thee Jerusalem before my chiefest joy.*

And in the first of *Samuel, 4. 19.* it is noted unto the everlasting praise of the wife of *Phineas*, that when the *Philistines* prevailed over the people of God, and one trouble came upon her on the neck of another: as the taking of the Ark, the fall of her father, the death of her husband, and the overthrow of the Host, &c. Yet above all, the report of taking the Ark of the Lord, it was a

wound unto her soul, hastned her travell, & called her child *Ichabod*, that is, *no glory*; or, *the glory is departed from Israel, because the ark was taken.*

Je 1.

Well, if the Lord should afflict us, and should threaten to destroy us, to remove the Gospel, to take away his zealous and faithfull Ministers, to make the golden Bells of *Aaron* yield no sound; what are we to do?

Namely, this must be our refuge, we must fly unto God by true and hearty prayer, bewail our sins, acknowledge and truly confesse them to God, ply the Lord with prayers and tears; for the prayer of a righteous man is

Jam. 5.

of endlesse force. Now, if the prayer of one righteous man be of that force and strength, how much more available are the prayers of hundreds or thousands, that are gathered together in one? One cord may easily be broken, but a three-fold cord cannot easily be broken. *Elias* is called the Chariot and Horsemen of *Israel*, because by faithfull prayers which he had made unto God, he could

do no more for the defence of God's holy

Church, than an Army of Souldiers.

Seeing the troubles of others must move pittie on our selves, than woe unto them that are secure, that laugh when the Church weepeth, that live in bravery, when the Church is in sackcloth and ashes; that feast, when the Church do fast. This was the practise of those that lived in the time of *Esay, Esa. 22. 12, 13, 14. In that day did the Lord of hosts call unto weeping and mourning, to baldness and girding with sackcloth: And behold joy and gladnesse, slaying of oxen and killing of sheep, eating flesh and drinking, for to morrow we shall die.*

Hereunto accorderh that of the Prophet *Amos, Amos 6. Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, &c.* where we see he pronounceth the wofull estate and condition of those who lived without regard of the judgments of God layed upon the Church. And certainly the times wherein we live, do call upon us to the practise of this heavenly and christian duty.

But much more are they condemned,

ned; that are so far from pittying the Churches troubles, that rather (without all naturall affection, as if they were born of Wolves, or nourished of Tygers) seek to cut the throat of the Church, add unto their afflictions, and make the burthen heavier, even of them that are ready to fall. This doth the Prophet speak of such, *Ps. 96. 20. They persecute him whom thou hast mitten, and add unto the sorrow of them whom thou hast wounded.*

Doct. 4.
Prayer
for the
Church,
a Christi-
an duty

In that the Prophet *David* doth not pray for himself alone, but is mindfull of the whole Church and people of God, and therefore prayes for them, that God would blesse them, and defend them: Hence we do observe, That it is the duty of every Christian man and woman, that be true members of the Church of God, not onely to pray for themselves, but also to pray uncessantly for the Church of God, that God would be favourable to his people, blesse his children, and seek the welfare of Gods Church.

This we may see by the example
of.

of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. who prayed for the *Sodomites*, that they might be spared. This we may see in *Nehemiah*, *Nehem.* 1. 4, 5. who mourned, fasted, and prayed unto the God of heaven, when he saw that the Church was in misery. And this affection was in *David*, when he saith, *Pf.* 137. *We sat down and wept when we remembered thee O Sion.* And when the people desired *Samuel* to pray for them, *1 Sam.* 12. 32. he said, *God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, and cease praying for you.* This *Paul* performed for the *Romans*, *Rom.* 1. 9, 10. *God is my witness (whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospell of his Son) that without ceasing I make mention of you in my prayers.* We must pray at all times, and in all places; in the *Egyptian* Palace with *Joseph*, in the *Babylonish* Court with *Isaiah*, in the *Whales* belly with *Jonas*, on the solitary Mount with our Saviour, with *Peter* in Prison, with *Paul* on the Sea-shore, and with *Sylas* in the Stocks: And therefore let us pray (my beloved) with unfeigned hearts, and with
elevare

elevated spirits, that our devotions may mount the Heavens, to God the Father for the peace of *Jerusalem*; and for our reward it is here promised to them that do it, that they shall prosper.

So that we see here it hath been the practise of the Church and the people of God, to pray for the Church of God, and that indeed for sundry reasons.

PL. 12. 22 First, it is God's commandment, that we should pray for the Church of God, *Pray for the Church or peace of Jerusalem*, that is, for the good and flourishing estate of Gods Church and people.

Secondly, as it is Gods commandment, so it is for our own good, because we shall fare the better for the common good of Gods Church; *They shall prosper that love thee.*

Thirdly, we are or should be members of the Church of God, whereof Christ is the onely head. Now then, Members of one and the same body should procure the good one of another; and therefore if it still go ill
with

with the Church of God, it cannot go well with us.

How did *Moses* plead with God sundry times for his Church and people? So *Nehemy*, he fasted and prayed for the Church in misery, and for the City of his Fathers, *Jerusalem*.

Exo. 23.

And as it is the duty of all ingenerall to pray, and procure the peace and prosperity of God's Church and his people; so especially ought Kings and Magistrates, who are the Governours and Leaders of God's people, and his Lieutenants upon earth. Secondly, Ministers are bound to pray for God's Church, and the peace of *Jerusalem*, which is the Object of our prayers.

Now there be three sorts of peace which we must pray for: First, the peace of Conscience. Secondly, the peace of the World. Thirdly, the peace of Heaven. Now we may read in *Matthew*, how the devills themselves have a peace; for when Christ came and did appeare to them, they cryed out, *What have we to do with thee, O thou Jesus, art thou come to torment us*
be-

before our time? which shewes they have some peace, though devills. Then there is a second peace, which is wished by all people, which was denounced at our Saviours birth by the Angels, saying, *Peace on earth, and good wil towards men*: But the chiefeſt peace that we muſt pray for, is the peace of heaven, where is comfort and diverſity of pleaſure: God is the Author of peace, becauſe of his Maſte-ry and of his glory. Thirdly, peace on earth, which is the preparation to happineſſe; and peace muſt be firſt obtained and had, before we can enter into glory: then peace, and charity, and hope will ceaſe, but love and glory never ſhall have an end, but be permiſſent, and of eternall durance. This peace which *David* deſires, is for his own people, and for *Jeruſa'ems* ſake that great City. Oh pray for the peace of *Jeruſalem*, which is an act of charity; then it follows, they ſhall proſper that love it; there is the bleſſing promiſed to thoſe which pray for the Church of *Jeruſalem*. *For Sions ſake I will not hold my peace,*

peace, and for Jerusalems sake I will not rest, untill the righteousness thereof break forth as the light, and the salvation thereof as a burning lamp. I have set a watchman upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which all the day and all night continually shall not cease. Ye that are mindfull of the Lord keep not silence.

vers. 6.

Use 3.

If this be the duty of all men, to labour to procure the welfare and happiness of Gods Church and people, then most wofull is the estate of all those that hinder the true worship and service of God, when wicked men (like to bloody Saul) shall breathe out threatnings and slaughter to the Church of God. Well, we shall read in the Word of God, as also in the Acts and Monuments, we shall ever find the end of Persecutors to be exceeding horrible, and very fearfull: some of them were stricken down with present death, some dying desperately, and despairing of Gods mercy, some run mad, and other the like fearfull ends, which might admonish all persecuting Tyrants, and bloody enemies of the Church,

Act. 9.1.

to alter and change their cruelties, and no more to persecute the poor Church and children of God, lest they be plagued in like manner.

Be favourable.

Doff. 3.
Liberty
of Prea-
ching
one of
God's fa-
vours.

That is, so blesse thy poor Spouse, that in it thy servants, the holy Prophets, may ever preach thy sacred Word; that thy worship and service may sincerely be performed, and thy Name called upon; the number of the Elect may be encreased, and many souls saved. Hence we learn, that it is the great favour and mercy of God to any Church or People, when the Word and Gospell of God is soundly and sincerely preached, and the Sacrament duly administred; when the people may with liberty and comfort come together to sanctifie God's Sabbath, to call on the Lord in his Sanctuary, to worship the Lord in his holy house.

And surely we do see here, what great cause we have to blesse the holy name of God in this Land, how gracious the Lord hath been unto us above all Nations that are round about us.

So

So on the contrary part, it is a great and grievous judgement of God to want faithfull Ministers, and holy servants of God; when God shall cause the golden bells of *Aaron* to cease, it is a token of God's displeasure with any People, Town, or Kingdome; then the Lord frownes upon them, and is exceeding angry with them; and then woe to that Nation or Country, when the Lord departs from them, when he shall take away their watchmen, when he shall deprive them of their faithfull Ministers, when he shall take away his Word and Gospell. The Lord threatens this as the greatest of all judgments; then comes in sin, ignorance, prophanenesse, impiety, idolatry, superstition, and all manner of sin, till the Lord come with his judgments to destroy them.

Amos 2.

11.

Rev. 2.

Seeing it is so great a token of the Lord's disfavour, of his anger, and displeasure against any Church or Kingdom, Oh then, let us repent of our sins, let us entreat the Lord not to bring this judgment upon us, but

Isa 1.

ra-

rather to humble us by any other means, as it pleaseth his Majesty.

Vse 2.

Prov. 29.

This condemns a plain dotage, and foolish dream of ignorant persons: Oh (say some.) it was never a good world since we had so much preaching; but in time of Popery, then all things were cheap. And so they gather by outward peace and tranquillity, that God loved them, and liked of them: But we see here, howsoever many poor souls may deceive themselves, it is a singular favour of God to a people, when he gives them his Gospel to be truly preached and taught to them, when they may call upon him in publick & private; this is a speciall favour of God: But where this is wanting, *where prophecying fails, the people perish.* For where the Word of God is not preached, and the people taught, there they are ignorant, blinde, and prophane, and all manner of iniquity abounds, and where sin abounds, there the curse of God must needs hang over the heads of that people: For where the Word is not preached, & the people taught, though

though they abound in all prosperity, yet it is not so great a favour as they think it to be, nay, it may be a judgment unto them, for what are they the better to have peace and plenty, ease and liberty, when they want the favour of the Almighty? For every benefit is not a blessing.

According to thy good pleasure.

THese words contain the ground of his Request, namely, the endless mercy and favour of God in Jesus Christ, not any goodnesse or worthinesse of their own, of *David*, or the people; but he builds his faith and Petition on *Gods* meer mercy in Christ.

Hence we learn, that we must build our faith not upon any goodnesse, desert, or worthinesse of our own, but upon the alone mercy and good pleasure of God, *Dan. 9.* He doth confesse it is true, that they dare not appear in their own name or worthinesse, but onely in the mercy of God in Christ: *To us belongs shame and confusion of face; but Lord, for thy tender mercies sake hear us.*

Dolt. 4.
Faith
must not
rest upon
others
merits.

Dan. 4.

When

Lam. 3.
22.

When the Church of God was in great affliction, they acknowledge it the Lord's great mercy they were not consumed for their sins, *because his compassion fails not.* So then let us know, that we must lay this ground of all our prayers, even on God's endlesse mercy in Christ, not our owne worthinesse.

Vse 1.

This condemns all such pride as the Papists are guilty of, when they do lean so much upon their owne merits, worthiness, and deserts; and think God should hear them, and help them for the same: yea, they make Saints and Angells Mediators, whereas we must onely relie on Gods mercy in Christ for all good things.

Vse 2.

Seeing *David* doth build his faith and prayer upon God's mercy alone, without any respect of his worthinesse, or goodnesse of the people; we learn, in all our prayers to rely wholly on God's mercy, and not think that we are worthy to be heard for our own worthinesse or deserts: No, no, let us confess and say, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy*

name

name be the glory: for we are not worthy of the least favour.

Many of us, when we are at our prayers in the Church, be led away with a world of fancies, and mingle our Devotions with the cares and thoughts of the World, and instead of lifting up our hearts and hands to God, to beg mercy and forgiveness for our sins, we lift up our eyes to see what new fashions we can spy; and if not so, then we hold up our heads on high, thereby to shew our pride; or otherwise on our elbowes, are sleeping in our Pewes or Seates: But let me tell those that sleepe in the House of God, in the time of Divine Service, or Sermon, they are dead to God already, & the Preacher (may be supposed to be) preaching their Funerall Sermons. O let us take heed wee be not overtaken with any of these infirmities, or if we are, or have been, let us strive earnestly and speedily to forsake them, lest we be suddenly taken away by the hand of death; as was *Herod* and *Ananias*, &c. Therefore let us watch with the Lord one hour

Note.

Exhor.

houre by prayer, and especially upon his own Day, and in his own House; for Prayer is an Antidote against all the poysonous darts and inticements of Satan, it elevates our thoughts and meditations on better things than ever we can here enjoy, it takes away our affections from the vaine and momentary delights of this wicked world, and by the grace of God may be a means to strengthen us against the strongest assaults of Satan, to his utter ruine of us. For if Satan but once perceive, that we begin to have but a thought of Prayer, he then steales away presently, and dares not approach to attempt us. I can assure you, Prayer is powerfull, profitable, and delectable; powerfull it is, for it is the key of God's Cabinet, which opens the blessings of God to man; it is a cure for all diseases, and a remedy against all despairs: for in the depth of all our sorrows, nothing is so comfortable or profitable as Prayer; it steeres and keepes the heart in the right way, from many other inconveniencies, and evill imaginations; for

our

our bodies are the cages of unclean birds, when indeed they ought to be the Temples of the Holy Ghost: nor are the best of our actions but unjust, and our devotion only eloquence of words, mingled with worldly cares and distracted thoughts: O let us remember this, that our Consciences cannot die with us, nor yet die within us, but will arise and open it selfe at last, though our sinnes were never so secretly and closely kept or hid from the eyes of man, yet the All-seeing eye of God, by our owne consciences shall witness against us: therefore let us pray for a heart of Repentance now in the time of Grace, and under the Gospell. It was the saying of that old Practitioner St. *Paul*, *Pray continually* (saith he) and it should be our daily prayer, Lord so strengthen us, that our prayers may be effectually before thee. To pray twice a day every man ought to do; this he may do, more he can do, lesse he cannot do: Let us therefore every morning sacrifice our first born unto God, that is, our first thoughts, and in the

Z

even-

evening our last thoughts : our prayers do circumvent Satans incursions. It is prayer which pleases God, and our prayers are as so many cords, which bind us to the horns of the Altar. Oh how many men can sweare by their faith, which never pray by their Faith; and when they go to bed and rise againe, never acknowledge Gods mercy to be renewed unto them, but like a dogge shake their ears and so fall to drinking, and eating, and swearing. O that men were as full of getting grace, as many men are desirous to get wealth; but most men in these our sinfull and latter dayes, pray for Riches, seek after lands, pursue honour and pleasure, projecting and beating their brains how to increase Riches, which are the fading blossoms of this earth; whilst in the mean time, (like the Rich man in the Gospell) which had all things at his command; his barnes full, one of corn, and the other of sin: but observe what became of him for all his Riches: he went to bed, but he never awaked again, for that very night his
soul

soul was taken from him. None of Gods Children we ever read of did so, their prayers were otherwise; it cost them many sighs, and teares to have the knowledge of God, and of their sinnes; thereby to subdue the corruptions of their bodies, and to have dominion over the world, and the in-
timents thereof. This was *David's* prayer and supplication to God; to pray him in his good time and pleasure, to build up the walls of *Jerusalem*; that is, the breaches and divisions of the Church, which was torn, and rent by reason of his sins, prayer overcomes, but prayer was never overcome. *Hezekias* prayer shall pre-
vaile, *Elias* his desires granted; the *Ninevites* Repentance caused showrs of mercy, instead of Vials of wrath: this may make us to have strength and power, as further when we see, prayer stops the mouth of Lions, as it did when *Daniel* was flung into their Den: it is a *Sampsons* lock, which pulls the whole house upon the *Philistines* heads: it can make a Prison a palace, as it did to *Joseph*; it can open

the prison door, as it did to *Peter* ; it can divide the Sea , and make it like a wall on every side , as it did to the children of *Israel*. Prayer, I say, is a messenger of God, it drives away the enemy of our souls : nay , it will subdue our bodily enemies , and mollifie their hard hearts : Prayer doth remove the poyson of sinne from our souls , and it brings all true joy and comfort to our hearts ; it is better than either Oyle or Wine , though with abundance of increase ; therefore I say, he that will rejoyce continually, let him pray without ceasing ; that is , as often as he hath opportunity, or at the least twice a day , for prayer will be no hinderance to any man , no more then a man that is in a journey , and doth alight to refresh himselfe, or to mend what is amisse. If thou answerest and sayest , thou shalt lose a customer, I will tell thee , thou shalt get Grace and Favour of God ; if thou hinderest thy selfe in the sale of thy goods, and trade , thou shalt get knowledge; and with *Mary* in the Gospell, chuse the better part , and re-

receive the greater glory, &c.

O let us spare some time in the morning to pray to our God, and let us entertain with cheerfulness such a custome into our hearts; we have not so great a task imposed upon us, as to take all the paines for our bodies, and none for our souls; unhappy shall he be for ever, who prefers his Mammon before his God. He that to keep his body shall sell his soul, shall when too late, repent so unhappy departure. How fearfull a change shall he make, who to gaine an applause on Earth, shall lose a reward in Heaven; Let us not deceive our selves, onely he shall receive a crown in Heaven, who hath been a faithfull servant on Earth. Who so doth truly endeavour to be of the Church-militant, shall undoubtedly have a part in the Church triumphant; if we shall follow the works of grace here, we shall never go without the works of glory hereafter: And so I come now to the second part of the Verse, which is *David's earnest Request, and Prayer to God, And build up the walls of Jerusalem.* &c.

Z 2

And

The second
part of
the verse

And build up the walls of Jerusalem.

THis is the second part of the Verse, wherein he intreates the Lord not to hinder the building or erecting of his Temple for his sake; but rather to enlarge and make up that same breach which he had broken down by his foul and bloody sins: As if he should say, O Lord, I have by my sins done what lies in my power to hinder thy Church, and to pluck down the wall of thy protection; yea, to lay them open to the sword of the enemy, and to all thy judgements. But I pray thee (O Lord) that thou wouldst in mercy make up that breach, *Build up the walls of Jerusalem*, the City wherein thy Temple is built, and thy Name is called upon, the seat of thy worship and service.

Doct. 5
Sinnes of
the Magistrate
provoke
Gods anger
very
highly.

Doth *David* confesse, that by his sins of Adultery and Murder he had done what lay in his power, even to pull down the walls of Gods Church and people, even to lay them open to Gods judgements, plagues, and punishments? Then hence we learn, that

that the finnes of the Prince and Magistrates, and chief Rulers, as Kings, Queens, &c. they do cast the whole people and Kingdome into great danger, and provoke Gods anger against them, and open the Flood-gates of Gods vengeance: for their finnes be as their persons be, and a small sinne in a great Magistrate, in a Minister, in a King, is a great spot, and a foul blemish. The *Egyptians* were all afflicted by reason of *Pharaohs* transgression. So we see that when *Achan* sinned, though no great man, yet it brought the curse of God upon all the people: So in the dayes of *Saul*, *Achab*, *Joram*, and the like; when such Kings lived in impiety, Idolatry, and did so persecute Gods people and Prophets, we see in the Word how God did plague both them and their people.

The Reasons why the finnes of the King do inwrap the people in that judgement of God, is this; because look how the King is, so (for the most part) are the people; if he be an Idolater, so are they: for look how the

the King is affected, so be most of his Subjects.

Vse 1.

2 Sam.
24.

El. 3. 1, 2.

Doct. 6.
A peni-
tent will
seek to
build up
that
which be-
fore he
had pul-
led down

Seeing this is so, that the sin of the Prince and the chief Magistrate, is so great a means to pull downe Gods judgement upon the whole people, and wraps them up in the like judgement, as we see in *David*, who for his sinne of numbering the people, 70000 were slain. We learn hence, that it is a great mercy of God; to have such a King as walkes with God, is carefull to honour God, and to live in his fear; for then he shall not onely procure a blessing upon himselfe, But on all his people and subjects: And the contrary is a fearful judgement of God upon a Land, when he gives them wicked Kings and Princes.

We learn by the example of *David*, that those who have by their sinnes hindered the good estate of Gods Church and people; whether King, Prince, Magistrate, or Ministers, if they do truly repent, they will be as carefull to build up the walls of Gods Church again, to pray for it, to

pro-

procure the good of it. *Saul* did persecute the Church, he sought the ruine of it, and to pluck out the throat of poore Christians, and to such their blood, but after he was wounded and humbled, he became a Preacher of the Word, and sought to build as fast as ever he pulled down before.

Acts 9.

*2 Cor.
33.14.*

Is. 2.

Well then, hast thou heretofore hated Gods Children, persecuted them, reproached them, sought to hinder the good of Gods Church and people, and the Gospel of Christ? If thou dost ever repent, thou must shew it in this, in loving Gods Children, furthering Gods Truth, upholding Christ's Kingdome, and glorifying his Gospell, else thou dost never soundly repent. Hast thou by evill examples by a sinfull life, by negligence of holy duties, by lewd advice and wicked counsell, drawn and allured others to sin, and to bring Gods judgements upon them? if thou dost truly and earnestly repent, thou shalt bewaile this sinne, and pray for them whom thou hast thus wronged.

Z 5

Again,

Dolt. 7.

A man
cannot
pray till
he repent

Againe, out of the whole verse mark this lesson and instruction well; namely, that *David*, who before durst hardly approach unto God, and open his mouth in prayer for himselfe, yet now upon his Repentance and reconciliation with God, is bold to pray for others: yea, to pray for the whole Church of God. Hence we learne, that as long as a poore mortall man lives in sinne without pardon and true repentance, he cannot pray for himselfe, he cannot, and dares not open his mouth unto God to pray for himselfe, much lesse for others; but when he shall truly repent, turn to God, after he is reconciled to God in Christ, then he can come with much boldnesse unto God, and pray for himselfe and others also; *when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*: shewing, that till he was converted, he could not help or strengthen his brethren.

Seeing before men and woman be converted and do repent, and be at peace with God, it is impossible they should pray for others, or do any
good

good : This should first admonish all Ministers of the Word of God to repent , and to be at peace with God, for otherwise it is impossible for them to pray for others , or do any good thing to please God. And though they teach and preach the Word , yet they sin in it, and please not God, and cannot perform one speciall part of their Office, namely, to pray for Gods people effectually,



VERSE XVI.

Then shalt thou accept the sacrifice of Righteousnesse, even the burnt Offering and Oblation; then shall they offer Calves upon thine Altar.

IN this Verse is contained the fruit of Gods mercy and favour , both to David , and the people, and the fruit is double.

First, in regard of God, that he shall then accept, and be well pleased with their sacrifices.

Secondly , in regard of David and the people , they vow and covenant with the Lord , to offer praise and thanks

thanks unto God for so great a favour and blessing.

Then shalt thou accept the sacrifice.

AS if he should say, O Lord, when thou shalt thus be favourable to thy poore Spouse the Church, and forgive my heinous offences, and make good that breach which is broken by my filthy sins, then shall thy mercy be seen, in that thou shalt accept of our sacrifices, and such duties of thy service and worship, as we shall perform unto thee.

The Doctrine is this: when a people or Kingdome do repent and turn to God for mercy, amend their lives, so as God is reconciled unto them, then he doth accept of their sacrifices, Oblations, Prayers, &c. being done in Faith and Repentance: but so long as they live in sinne without Repentance, the Lord being not reconciled unto them, he esteems not of that they do.

Use 1.

Seeing the Lord doth then accept of a people, when they repent, and be reconciled unto God, amend their sinfull lives: Let us learn from this
Doctrine.

Doctrinē, that if we desire to have the Gospell continued, our peace prolonged, and the service and worship of God to be established, there is no other way but this, to seek to God by true Repentance, to get our sins pardoned, and to be at peace with the Almighty.

Oh then repent and amend; for if you will not repent, and amend your works and wayes, the Lord our God will not accept of us, nor regard us, *Jer. 7.* Yea, he will remove our *Candlestick* from us, *Rev. 2.* that our golden dayes shall have an end, and our mirth shall be turned into mourning, and our light into darknesse.

The sacrifice of Righteousness.

That is, such sacrifices as are done by the prescript rule of the Holy Word, such as God requires, and in that right and lawfull manner which he commands in His Holy Word. Now the sacrifice of a troubled spirit is the Incense of Tears which God did accept at *David's* hand: for they that sow in teares shall reape in joy, as *David* did; for he found more
com-

Dott. 1.
 What be
 those sa-
 crifices
 that God
 doth ac-
 cept of.

comfort after his confession then he did before.

Hence we see what be those Sacrifices which the Lord accepteth of in his Worship and Service. Namely, *The sacrifice of Righteousnesse*, that is lawfull Sacrifices, allowed and warranted by the Word of God, and such as being lawfull, are performed in a right and holy manner, according to the prescript rule of Gods word: But as for the Sacrifices which are not warranted by the Word of God, nor done in a lawfull and holy manner, according to the rules of Gods Word, the Lord careth not for them.

Now it may be asked, how David can say, *The Lord accepts sacrifices*, seeing in the former verse he said, God doth desire no sacrifice? Now he here affirmeth, that the Lord shall accept the sacrifice of Righteousnesse.

I answer, That such Sacrifices as are offered with opinion of merit, as the *Jewes* did, who thought by offering a Beast, that God was satisfied, and so they might be bold to live in sin; and such as they offered (without
 faith

faith and Repentance) the Lord esteemed not of them. No, let every true penitent sinner, like *David*, offer the Sacrifice of prayer and Thanksgiving, and of a contrite heart, which is more than all outward Sacrifices; for those who do truly repent, and become good Christians, are termed, or called Gods Manuscripts, wherein he writes his Lawes, and by them relates his will to others, that is a true Sacrifice to have a penitent heart. No incense will God accept of, but our true and penitentiall tears, no Sacrifice but Prayers, put up to him in faith; no Mediator but his Son, and our onely Saviour Jesus Christ; who is the Son of his love, and the Lamb of his bosome. God doth not look so much at our actions, as at our affections, for God saith, *Son, give me thy heart*: He desires nothing of thee for all those gifts he hath and doth bestow upon thee from day to day, but thy selfe: therefore if thou wilt give God the best and truest Sacrifice, thou must present thy selfe for that Sacrifice: there is nothing bet-

better for a Sacrifice to present God withall, than our heart, nothing better pleasing to him than that: God commands the first born to be offered to him as a Sacrifice, and if we will do that, we must then give him our heart, for that is the first thing that lives within us; other outward Sacrifice God is not pleased to accept; because it is corrupt, and God is immortall; and God being immortall, shall we present him with things that are mortall, and defiled? yet it must be the heart, and a new heart, which must be created by Repentance; and that must come by our earnest Prayer, and a fervent desire to hear the Word Preached; for out of the heart comes grace and goodness; and out of the body comes only naturall infirmities; therefore we must keep our hearts with all care and diligence, for that sacrifice which is performed without the heart, is but a counterfeite and a ceremonious sacrifice; being assured, that *The sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart, O Lord thou wilt not despise.*

But

But here he saith, that God will accept, and like of such as are offered in a holy manner, according to the Rules of Gods Word. That is, when Sacrifices commanded of God are offered in a holy manner, as in Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, and not to merit any thing, but as exercises of Faith and Repentance, and types of Christ Jesus, to lead them unto him, and as testimonies of their thankfulness to God, and so far forth as they served for the furtherance of Gods glory, and the edification of his Church.

The Doctrine then is clear, that it is not left to man to ordain and appoint the service and worship of God, to put in what he will, or to put out at his pleasure; but if we will have our sacrifice and worship of God acceptable and truly to please God, we must give the Lord leave to commend and prescribe what he thinketh good, and we must not dare to adde any thing of our owne, nor to take away his worship and service, *Deut. 12. 8. 32.* we are forbidden to adde

adde or take away any thing from his Laws, in which he prescribeth the Rules of his worship, *Deut. 32. 17.* When the *Jewes* worship God, after their owne fantasie, the Lord saith, they worship not God, but Devills, and the Lord holds it a vaine thing to teach his worship and feare by the precepts of man. So then all such Sacrifices of Righteousnesse be the Worship of God, which be warranted by his Word; and nothing may go under the name of his Service and Worship, but that he prescribes in his Word.

This condemnes the greatest part of the Worship of God amongst the Papists, their seven Sacraments, their adoration of Images, and their praying to Saints, their abominable Masse, their voluntary Poverty, and perpetuall Chastity; For which they can shew no word of warrant in all the Scriptures; and therefore it is no right Sacrifice, and ought to be abhorred.

This meeteth just with the common Christians, all men (though never

ver so vile) will confesse God must be adored ; but when it is demanded, what is the sacrifice that God likes of , then they offer what they list themselves : Some imagine they serve God well with their good meaning, some, by their good doings , and by their good dealings , and civill honest life , so long as they think no harme, nor say none , they think they serve God as well as the best : Some think, if they rehearse and number over the ten Commandements, and the Creed, for prayers they serve God highly : but poor souls , is this all you do in Gods service ? Is here all the sacrifice you offer him ? It is a cold and slender sacrifice. Let our Sacrifices which we offer God, be first exact and pure ; secondly constant : first, pure, without Hypocrisie ; and undefiled , without being mingled with earthly cares : and our hearts likewise free from envy and malice. Secondly, constant we must be in our Sacrifice , not serve God by fits and starts , or when we are at leisure ; this is no true Sacrifice : we ought to do it exactly , and
with

with Holinesse and Righteousnesse as it becomes Christians. In the old Law they offered the Sacrifice of burnt Offerings, a Lambe without spot or blemish: something was still offered as an Oblation to pacify Gods wrath: now if we cannot offer that Sacrifice of a Lambe without spot or blemish, which is meant our souls, then let us bring two Turtle-Doves with us, that is our Love and Obedience; for the Turtle-Doves are so loving each to other, that they are never asunder: If we cannot offer that sacrifice, let us bring a paire of young Pigeons; that is, our sacrifice of a contrite heart, sighing, and sorrowing for our sinnes; for Pigeons they are alwayes mourning and sorrowing; if we cannot pray, let us hold up our hands; if we cannot weep for sinnes, let us sigh out our prayers; if we cannot sigh, let us labour to humble our selves; and if we can but do this, then will God accept our Sacrifice, and hear our Petition, and send us our desires, even blessings upon blessings, both outward

ward and inward ; outward in our temporall estates', and inward by spirituall and heavenly thoughts to our souls ; and for the time to come, let us double our care and diligence, and take time while we have it ; and take the balme of *Gilead* while we have strength to apply it ; for no man can work when night comes ; when Death hath seized us , there is no Repentance to be looked for, no sacrifice to be offered.

Then shall they offer Calves upon thine Altar.

IN this part of the verse is shewed what is the fruit of Gods mercy in *David* , and the people, namely this , that they will promise and covenant with God for their deliverance , to offer unto God praise and thanksgiving.

Hence we learn , that it is our duty to binde our selves by solemn covenant and promise to God ; that if he will deliver us from misery , trouble, affliction, judgement, punishment , and from unreasonable men , that then we will offer Him
praise

*Doct. 3.
Solemn
Vows a
Christi-
ans duty*

Gen. 28.

2.

1 Cor. 3. 3

Psa. 116.

praise and thanksgiving, call upon him, - serve and worship him all our dayes: *Jacob* vowed, that if the Lord would be with him in his journey to keep him, and defend him in it, he would then build a house to God, and worship him there. *Josias* made a covenant unto the Lord, and all the people with him; to serve the Lord, who did deliver him from the curse of the Law. *David* did often use this, to bind himselfe by a Covenant to serve the Lord, *Psa. 116*. He payed his vowes he made to God: So *Jephtha*, *Judg. 11*. vowed unto the Lord that he would offer sacrifice unto the Lord, who gave him victory; and though the matter of his Vow was unlawfull, yet his Vow to honour God was the fruit of Faith.

Use 2.

Well then, let us make our use of this Doctrine; and seeing it is not only lawfull, but also our duty, even for to make solemn covenants unto God, that if he will be favourable unto *Sion*, and build up the walls of *Jerusalem*: that if he shall deliver us from any danger, judgements, affliction
what-

whatsoever, that we will be carefull to honour God, to be thankfull unto his Divine Majesty: Let us then make this Covenant with the Lord our God; let us vow obedience and newnesse of life, & let us say with David, *I have sworn, & am steadfastly purposed to keep thy righteous judgments.* So let us even take a solemne vow of our own selves, that by the grace of Almighty God, we will have more care to laud God, to honour him, to serve him, to call upon him; and accordingly let us be mindful to perform the same; for the Lord will require all the vows we make unto him.

Psa. 119.

This may stirre us up to remember what a solemne vow and promise we have made in Baptism, to forsake the Devill and all his works, the vaine pomp and glory of the world, that we will forsake the Devill, sinne, and Satan, so as we will not follow nor be led by them, yea, that we will manfully fight under the Banner of Christ Jesus, and become his faithfull souldiers and servants unto our lives end.

This

This is the Covenant which we have made every one of us in our Baptism, and entrance into the house of the Lord, before the presence of God, and his holy Angels, before the Congregation and Church of God: But (alas) we break it every day, and have neither care nor conscience to keep it. Well, let us know the Lord will one day require our Covenants and vowes, which we have made unto Him: He looketh that we should as well keep them, as make them. Well then, wouldest thou be loath to break thy Vow, Covenant, or Promise made to an honest man, especially being in thine own power to keep it, and such a promise as the keeping whereof may procure thee much peace, liberty, and freedome? I know you would: O then let us be as carefull to keep promise with God, and to renounce the World, the Devill our enemy, and our sinfull lusts, and let us be like *David*, to crosse the Devils snares and temptations; and let our bodies be no more the receptacles of sin, and transgression, which is the

the cause why our souls cannot heare the sweet Harmony of the blessed Angels, which if we labour so to do, we shall bring much Honour to the Lord Almighty, and everlasting good to our own souls.

And last of all, we learn hence, that it is the duty of every Christian man and woman, to pray both publick and private, for the safety and good estate of the Church : so likewise it is our duty publickly to render thanks unto the Lord for deliverance bestowed upon the same. We may not be like to the nine Lepers who have wide mouths to begge, but neither heart nor mouth to give thanks for benefits received. It hath ever been the care and Religious custome of Gods Church and people after great and notable deliverances from visible and common judgments, to render hearty and earnest thanks to God in solemn and publick manner, *Gen. 8.* when *Noah* and his sons and family were newly delivered from perishing in the Flood, the first thing he did, he builded an Altar, offered sa-

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crifice,

Doct. 3.
A publick thanksgiving after deliverance required.

fice, and called on the Name of the Lord. So *Moses* and the children of *Israel*, after their deliverance out of *Egypt*, when they were safe, and their Enemies drowned, did devoutly and publicquely sing praise and thanks unto the Lord. *Deborah* and *Barac* did the like, *Judg. 5*. And the *Jews* being delivered from *Hamons* Treason, *Hest. 10*. they rejoyce and keep a solemn day to sing praise unto God.

Well, let us bring this Doctrine to our selves ; we are by Gods blessing the true Church and people of God, professing the Gospel of Jesus Christ truly, hating all superstition and idolatry, and for this cause we cannot want many Enemies. The Papists, the most subtile, cruell, and malicious Enemy of Gods Church, having often set upon us, assaulting us, sought to have invaded our King and Country, as in 88. by sundry treasons, to murder our late Queen of famous and blessed memory, and to destroy our gracious King and Queen, and all his Royall Posterity. But amongst the rest, and above all the rest,
none

none comparable to that last Treason, which was most close and in subtilly wrought, a long time in hatching, most bloudy and devilish, most barbarous and savage, threatening and seeking to destroy and root out King, Councell, Spirituall and Temporall Magistrates, aiming at the utter subversion of our English Nation, both Church and Common-wealth.

And surely, if we consider well of it, I do not see in all the Bible the like deliverance, so wonderfull and admirable.

1. Being so long a time in hatching and contriving, with such secrecy and concealment.

2. Being under the ground, in Hell as it were, in a place under the earth, desiring darkness more than light, because the deed was evil.

3. Being brought so near the execution of it, and never known nor suspected before.

4. Being disclosed so strangely, even by one of the Traitors themselves, one of the chiefeſt Actors in that Tragedy.

5. Being so generall, so fearfull, and so monstrous, as it should not have been to the destruction of one or two but of the chief of the whole Land, King, Queen, Prince, Nobles, Judges, Bishops : in a word, the flower of the Kingdome ; the want of any one whereof, were a blemish to a state, and would bring a ruine to a Kingdome.

Now do as *Ahashuerost* did *Hester* 6. 1. Cause the Records to be read, and Chronicles to be searched, Ancient and Modern, Divine or prophane, amongst the Turks or Pagans ; yea, if Hell keep any Records, search there and see if you can pattern this Conspiracy or matchless danger.

But there is no Councel against the Lord : Mans wisdom is foolishnesse, unto him, his greatest strength but weaknesse, his life but a breath, and his honour but a blast.

So then we see we have as great cause to render thanks unto the Lord as any people or Nation under Heaven. The 5 day of *November* is a day to be remembred, and never to be
for-

forgotten ; a glad and joyfull day, and we ought every one in publick and private to rouse and stir up our hearts in Thanksgiving unto the Lord ; for it was the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Such a Plot, and such a deliverance it was, that the like was never heard of. We may read in the Scripture of sundry deliverances, yet not of such a one as this : Sure this horrible Plot was hatched in Hell. We may likewise Read, that God did send down fire from Heaven to destroy *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, but of a fire out of the earth to burn, and blow up a whole State, I never read of : this surely must needs be from Hell. This day was such a day that I hope will never be forgotten by our Posterity ; for if it be as the Papists do labour and study exceedingly for to do, persuading the younger sort that are under their tuition, that there was no such plot or conspiracy, and that no such thing was ever intended by any of their Religion, onely a trick, (as they say) put upon a company

of younger brothers, to satisfie some malicious and envious humours which were their Enemies ; so that I say, if this dayes solemnity were not enacted by the High Court of Parliament, and the whole body of the Kingdome, that it should be observed and kept holy, they would as they do still, labour to bring to pass that in a few years space it might be forgotten ; which if we neglect to remember, and to give God thanks as I have said, by our Prayers and Almes, the very fowles in the air will one day witness against us, for an ungrateful and unthankfull generation. The Papists boast and brag much of *St. Peter* for their guider and director; which if they did but imitate and follow him, they would not do as they do, but be of his mind, for he was humble and meek; but now they have left *St. Peter*, & practise *Salt-Peter*, as they would have done, witness the fifth of *November*, and that likewise of 88. Is this to follow *St. Peters* Religion, and direction ? they may well brag of *St. Peters* Chair, but whether they can
of

of his charity ; judge yee my brethren, yea or no : for their Religion is rebellion, to kill Princes, to stab and poyson Kings and Queens; their treaties with other Nations are onely trecheries, fawnings and dissemblings, their Matches will over-vvatch us, if vvee doe not look to them better than vvith Match and Gun-povvder, vvich (as I say) vvas laid as this day 45. yeares, to have blowvn the vvhole povver and strength of this Kingdom up into the aire like Atomes, and Flyes in the Sun ; take but notice, if ever you read in Chronicle, or History, of the butchery of Kings, the deposing of Princes ; the Martyrdom of Religious Protestants, but still a Papists and a Jesuite had a hand in the plotting and devising of it ; then judge vvwhether their Religion be grounded upon Gods Word, or from any sacred Writ, yea or no ; or vvwhether they have any vvarrant for this their dissembling and disguising the Religion vvith a cloke of Knavery and Envy, as they do being assembled together in one place. It is the

Day which the Lord made for the glory of his Name, let us rejoyce and be glad in it, For God brought and delivered us out of the Egyptian bondage upon this day : Nay, our Church and Country too from a day of darknesse and Idolatry, to a day of light and Sun-shine of the Gospel. Some of us had not been living at this day, if their bondage and plot had effected ; God this day secured us from other Masters, that we might serve him ; and for this ought not we to render thanks, and praises ? yea, or else let our tongues cleave to the roofs of our mouthes.

Now it is not enough, to keep that day as an idle holy-day, to rest from labour and work, to ring Bells and make bon-fires to give our selves to eating and drinking and swill, to sport and pastime, for this is no honour unto God.

1. But first, our unthankfulnesse must appear in a most reverend and gratefull Commemoration and remembrance of this so great and wonderfull deliverance, we must call it to
mind

mind, think of the greatnesse of it; we must declare it to our children, and posterity, that when they shall aske the reason of it, we may cause and call upon them to be thankfull : For the child that is unborn, is bound to laud God for it, *Ex. 12.9.* O tast, saith *St. Gregory*, The Word of life with the pallsate of thy heart, and remember how good and gracious the Lord hath been unto us, and our nation, and what deliverance he had done for us sinfull men : what shall we then repay the Lord for his benefits, but only return him by a living sacrifice, praise and thanksgiving. And therefore let us dayly ascend Heaven by our meditations, lest at the last day we descend the contrary.

Secondly, we must sing Psalms of praise and thanksgiving unto God in token of thankfulness, and that publicly in the Church and congregation of Gods people.

Thirdly, we must come together into Gods house, to hear his Word and to call upon his Name, and that

is a speciall part of our unfeigned thankfulnesse. O how many men in these our dangerous and sinful times, live, and do nothing on the Sabbath day, spending it after their own desires ! How many in this Kingdome on this day, make their Chambers their Chappel, their Bed the Pew ; their snoring, their devotion ; their Cook, their Preacher ; their Belly, their God ; new cloaths, their Law and delight ; and spend their time only in invention, what will please their humours : O I fear my beloved, we have many of these finnes laid to our charge, in these our evill dayes, which God in his mercy cause every one to be heartily sorrow for them. We have even surfeited with the good things of this Land, as peace, plenty, and many other blessings yve have enjoyed these fifty years.

Fourthly, we must testifie our thankfulnesse in most hearty and dutifull obedience, vvhich is the greatest and best sacrifice, 1 Sam. 15. and if this be wanting, then all we do is nothing worth, Esa. 29. 13. So that
for

for our generall deliverance, there should be a general thanksgiving in a generall reformation of the Church and Common-wealth of our hearts and sinfull lives; otherwise indeed we are unthankful, if still we live in sinne and Rebellion ; then (notwithstanding our keeping a day, Ringing of Bells, sport and play) if there follow no reformation of our lives, we may justly fear a most dreadfull judgement, if no utter ruine and desolation to follow. Now alas, where is this of Gods mercy and our deliverance ; where do the people reform their lives, reform their vvayes, grow more Religious, conscionable, and carefull to hear, read, pray in their families : It is but a vvonder of nine dayes, men make little or no use of it, but to talk of it, and speak of it. O let us not be so careless of our own good, but use our best endeavour for the amendment of our lives : vvhich that all estates, and degrees of men may do, the Lord grant for his mercies, say. *Amen.*



A Morning Prayer for A Family.

*Lord teach us to pray: that we may call
upon thy Name: prepare our hearts to
seek thee: And open thou thy me. ci
full ears to hear us.*

Etternal and ever-living
Lord God, Creator and
continual preserver of all
things both in Heaven and in Earth;
By whose gracious Providence as
we were at the first wonderfully and
fearfully made, so we are no lesse
preserved and kept unto this present:
We here the workmanship of thine
own hands, desire to humble both
soul and body before thee. And now
Lord, we being here in thy presence,
cannot but acknowledge and con-
fess against our selves our own un-
worthiness to come before thee, to
call upon thee, or to perform even
the least Duty that shall concern
thy worship or glory. Our hearts
alass are no better than sinks of sinne,
and a mass of pollution and un-
clear-

cleannesse ; and who can make that
clean that is taken out of any unclear
thing ? The thoughts and imaginati-
ons of the same, must needs be evill
continually, and we unto every good
work prove Reprobates. Yet, O
Lord, seeing thou hast commanded
us to call upon thee, and hast merci-
fully promised to be present with
thy Children, to hear their Prayers,
and to grant their requests which
they put up in faith unto thee : O
Lord, this doth give us boldnesse to
come before thee ; and in confidence
of thy goodnesse that thou wilt make
good the same thy promise unto us
at this time, we here offer up unto
thee this Morning Sacrifice of Pray-
er and Thanksgiving, humbly ac-
knowledging and confessing from the
bottome of our hearts, our manifold
Transgressions and offences, which
we have continually multiplied a-
gainst thee, in thought, word, and
deed, from the beginning of our
dayes unto this present time. We
acknowledge O Lord, that our ori-
ginal corruption in the which We
were

were at the first conceived and born, and from which there hath sprung forth the most bitter and unfavoury fruit of sinne, Apostacy, and Rebellion, to the great dishonour of thy Name, the wounding of our poor Soules and Consciences, and the evill example of others amongst whom we have lived : By the which O God, we confesse that we have justly deserved that thy wrath and indignation should be poured out upon us, both in this life, and in the life to come.

And therefore O God, we come not here before thee in our own worthynesse, but in the worthiness and mediation of Jesus Christ : beseeching thy gracious goodnesse for his sake to forgive all our offences our visible sinnes, our secret sinnes, our sinnes of infirmity, our presumptuous sinnes, against Knowledge, against Conscience, against Thee, or against our Brethren, in the time of our younger yeares, or in the dayes of our knowledge, as we must needs confesse, that in many things we have

have sinned all. We pray thee, O God for Christ Jesus sake, to forgive the same unto us, and perswade our souls and consciences more and more, that thou art at peace with us, and that all our sinnes are done away in the blood of thy Sonne ; and grant O God, by the assistance and direction of the same thy spirit, that with more freedom of mind and liberty of will, we may serve thee in Righteousnesse and true holinesse unto the end of our dayes. And good Lord, begin not only repentance and true conversion in us, but of thy great mercy perfect the same ; O lead us forward more and more towards perfection, increase in us our saving knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Christ, our faith in thy promises, our Repentance from dead works, our fear of thy holy Name, our hatred of all our sinnes, and our love of thy truth. Frame our weak hearts (good Lord) more and more unto obedience unto thy Holy and Heavenly Will, and teach us in all things to resign our wills unto thy holy Will, and in
time

time of affliction, as in time of prosperity to depend upon thee; that we may not look too much upon our own weaknesse: but may stay our selves by thy power and promises.

And good Lord comfort our sorrowfull hearts and dejected soules that find dayly such cause of humiliation in our selves, doing dayly those things which we should not, and leaving undone those good things thou commandest: Oh then let us be truly humbled for the same, and for thy mercies sake give us better affections unto goodnesse, and power and ability to do that good thou commandest and requirest at our hands: that seeking in all good things to honour thee, and to extol thy name while we live here, we may at the last behold thy face in glory.

And now Lord together with our Prayers, we are bold to adde these praises unto thy great Name, for the manifold favours and blessings, the which from time to time thou hast bestowed upon us for this life, especially for a better life. We thank thee

hee for that it hath pleas'd thee of
thy gracious goodnesse to elect and
choose us to saluation before the
World was : for calling us by thy
Word in time, for justifying us by
thy Son Christ, and for giving us a
certain expectation of a better life
when this is ended : As also for the
happy meanes of our saluation, the
Sabbaths, Word, and Sacrament. Oh
it is thy great goodnesse, O Lord,
that thou hast not deprived us of
them all, in as much as we have from
time to time walked so unworthy
of thy love. O lay not to our
charge our great unthankfulnesse,
that we have not brought forth more
fruit of thy Word in our lives, but
give us we pray thee, that for the
time to come we may make more
right steps to thy Kingdome. And
we magnifie thy Name O Lord for
all the temporall blessings which
thou hast in mercy bestowed upon
us, our health, peace, food, rayment,
and for all the comforts of this life :
O Lord, give us a right use of them.
that we may not abuse them unto
Licen-

Licentiousnesse, but stirre us dayly by them to devote our selves unto thee and thy service. We acknowledge thy goodnesse towards us the night that now is past, freeing us from many eminent dangers, both of soule and body, & giving us sweet and comfortable rest : we beseech thee to be with us this day, and all the dayes of our lives, and teach us to walk as children of the light, that thy Name may be glorified by us, others may take good example, and we our selves enjoy the peace of a good Conscience, so as at the last we may come to raigne with thee in glory.

Blesse the Churches and Kingdoms wherein we live, with the continuance of our peace and true Religion ; be gracious unto the King and Queen, and all the Royall Progeny blesse all others in authority, the Ministers of thy Word, our afflicted brethren in body, or in mind, or both : Let it please thee O Lord, to stay them, and support them in time of their distress, and give unto them a happy issue out of the same, as it shall seem

seem good unto thee. And fit us for harder times whensoever it shall please thee to bring the same upon us : And keep us Lord in those dayes by thy mighty power. And thus have we commended our suites unto thee, humbly praying thee to pardon our wants now at this time in the performance of this duty : And thou that art privy to our wants better than we our selves are, we pray thee to take notice of them, & minister unto us a gracious supply in thy own due time, even for Jesus Christ sake, in whose Name we conclude these our weak and imperfect Prayers, in that perfect form of Prayer which he himself hath further taught us, saying, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

Evening Prayer for a Family.

O Lord prepare our hearts to Prayer.

O Eternal God, and our most loving and merciful Faither in Jesus Christ, and in Christ our Father : it is thy own Commandement, that we should call upon thy Name, & it is thy gracious and mercifull promise, that where

where two or three are gathered together in thy Name, there thou wilt be present among them. We thy poor and unworthy servants, dust and ashes, yet the workmanship of thine own hands, are now bold to come before thee to offer up unto thee this Evening Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving. And now, O Lord, being here before thee, we cannot but acknowledge and confess even from the bottome of our hearts against our selves, our own unworthiness, that we are grievous sinners, conceived in sin, and born in iniquity, and whereof we have brought forth most vile fruits in our lives, to the great dishonour of thy Name, the utter dismay- ing of our own Consciences, and the evill example of our brethren ; by the which we have deserved likewise thy wrath and heavy indignation should be powred upon us, both in this life, and that which is to come, in such sort as no creature in Heaven and Earth is able to reconcile us again to thy Majesty, but only thy Son Jesus Christ. We intreat thee therefore, O Lord, to be merciful unto us ; and as we acknowledge our sinns unto thee, so be thou faithful and just to forgive us our sinns, & to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse, Wash us thoroughly from our wickedness.

edness, and cleanse us from our sinnes; for we acknowledge, O Lord, that against thee we have sinned, and done our evils in thy sight, thou hast been a guide unto all our wayes, who alone are the searcher of the heart, and the tryer of the reines : To thee therefore O Lord do we come, to crave the pardon of our sins, both for the guilt and publishment of the same, that so they may not draw down upon us, our deserved judgment. And we intreat thee likewise as to pardon our sinns that are past in our lives, so to arme and strengthen us against sin for the time to come. Oh we have woefull experience in our selves of the weaknesse of our nature, how ready we are to fall from thee, and cannot keep so constant a watch over our own wayes, nor over our own hearts, but still are ready to start aside; O Lord, direct us aright in the paths of thy Commandements, let thy good spirit lead us forth into all truth, and these hearts of ours that are by nature so fraught with sin and wickedness, we pray thee alter and change : And bring into subjection daily every thought, and whatsoever thing else is in us, into faithfull obedience, unto Christ : Let us find dayly more and more the power of Christs
Death

death mortifying sin in us, and the efficacy of his Resurrection, raising us daily out of the grave of sin, unto newnels of life ; and give us Lord that we may dedicate our selves, our souls and bodies to be lively holy, and acceptable sacrifices unto thee. Let thy love shewed unto us, constrain us to love thee again, who first loved us. Thou O Lord, hast made us, and not we our selves ; thou hast made us not beasts, but men and women ; yea after thine own Image : thou didst preserve us in our Mothers wombs, and didst nourish us when we did hang upon the breast : thou hast still in mercy provided for us, and heaped upon us many blessings, which others want and stand in need of. O Lord, grant us a right use of all thy mercies, especially for that thou hast let us live in such a happy season of thy Gospel, in a time of peace and prosperity, wherein thou dost by the word continually call at the door of our hearts, and labourest our conversion. Oh Lord, we can never sufficiently admire thy goodness herein, and the rather because we have from time to time walked so unworthy of thy love. Forgive us, O Lord, our unthankfulness herein, and let us now walk as children of the light. O it is too much Lord,

that

Evening Prayer.

561

that we have spent the time that is last
past, according to the lusts of the flesh :
give us grace that we may spend that
short time that yet remaineth accord-
ing to thy Will ; set before our eyes the
shortness of our Lives, the day of Death
is sure in the end, unsure in the time ,
that we may be fully prepared for that
second comming of our Saviour unto
judgment. And now in the time of
our Prosperity, Lord teach us to think
of the time of adversity , and in the
time of our health, let us remember the
time of sickness, and the hour of death,
which shall come upon all flesh. Oh
let us be mindfull of our latter end, let
us number our dayes aright, that we
may apply our hearts unto wisdom,
and ever mind that reckoning and ac-
count which one day we shall give
unto thee : Make us while we live here
to be humble minded toward our bre-
thren, that we be lowly in our own eyes,
that we get contented hearts, pure af-
fections, chaste minds, and wise beha-
viours, and all other gifts of thine own
Spirit, that may adorn us in thy sight, and
may adde unto the credit of thy truth we
profess.

And good Lord, we pray thee accept
of our thanksgiving unto thy Majesty
for all thy mercies and blessings from
time

time to time bestowed upon us for this life and for a better. We praise thee for our Election, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification, continuall preservation, and the assurance that thou hast given us of a better life when this is ended, as also for all temporall blessings, health, wealth, peace, and prosperity : for thy goodness extended towards us for this day past, that thou hast gone in and out before us, and freed us from many dangers of soul and body, and brought us with peace and comfort unto the beginning of this night. Lord watch over us by thy Spirit and presence ; give us a holy & sanctified use of our rest & sleep and fit us for the duties of the next day ; especially O Lord, fit us for that Day which shall never give place to night, and grant unto us all good things that thou in thy wisdom knowest more expedient to give, than we to ask, even for Jesus Christs sake : to whom with thee O Father, together with the blessed Spirit, we acknowledge to be due, and desire to give all honour and praise and glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

FINIS.



